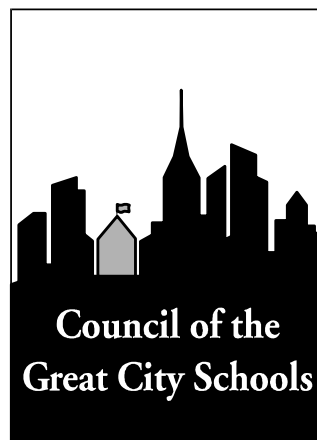


IMPROVING SPECIAL EDUCATION IN NEW YORK CITY'S DISTRICT 75

Report of the Strategic Support Team
Of the Council of the Great City Schools

Submitted to the New York City
Department of Education

By the
Council of the Great City Schools



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Acknowledgements

The Council of the Great City Schools thanks the many individuals who contributed to this review of the New York City Department of Education's District 75. The efforts and commitment of those participating in the project were critical to our ability to present the department with the best possible proposals.

First, we thank Chancellor Klein and Deputy Chancellor Lyles. They were clear from the beginning that they wanted a fresh and unbiased look at District 75. It took courage to take this step, given the controversy and passion that often surrounds this special structure within the school system. And it takes a special brand of courage to ask us to review these operations, because many of our reports can be critical and tough. These two leaders, however, have courage in abundance and a deep commitment to meeting the special needs of students with disabilities.

Second, we thank the staff members of the Department of Education and District 75 for all their assistance on this project. In particular, we thank Dr. Bonnie Brown, Superintendent of District 75; Mr. Gary Hecht, Deputy Superintendent; and Linda Wernikoff, Executive Director of the Office of Special Education Initiatives. They provided all the time, documents, and data we needed to do our work. In addition, we thank Lisa Dare, Chief Operating Officer of the Teaching and Learning division, and Thomas Huser, the division's Director of Strategic Communications for the many hours they spent coordinating focus groups meetings, finding and submitting documents, answering questions, and arranging the myriad details involved in putting together school visits and schedules.

Third, the Council of the Great City Schools thanks the parents and advocates with whom we met. They are working tirelessly in support of their children and the school system's work. We also apologize that we were not able to meet with everyone we know had something valuable to contribute to this project.

Fourth, the Council thanks the school systems that contributed staff to this effort. They included the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Miami-Dade County, and Dallas school systems. The generosity of these individuals and their school systems serves as another example of how the nation's urban public schools are banding together to help each other improve.

Fifth, we thank The Broad Foundation for providing funds to cover team members' travel, lodging, meals, and other expenses while they were in New York City on site visits.

Finally, I thank Julie Wright Halbert and Ricki Price-Baugh, members of the Council's staff, who coordinated the work of the team and provided valuable expertise in curriculum, instruction, and special education law. Ms. Halbert also worked extensively with Sue Gamm, the former director of special education for the Chicago schools, to prepare the final report. Their work was excellent and critical to the success of this effort. Thank you.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Improving Special Education in New York City's District 75

Purposes and Origins of the Project

This review of New York City's District 75 by the Council of the Great City Schools was requested by Deputy Chancellor Marcia Lyles in the fall of 2007, with approval from Chancellor Joel Klein.

Project Goals

The main goals of this review of District 75's programs and services were to—

- Analyze the operational and instructional efficacy of District 75 programs
- Examine the broad organizational structure and operations of District 75
- Assess District 75's overall congruence with the goals of Children First, i.e., gauge District 75's system of accountability while improving leadership and empowerment
- Review District 75's curriculum, professional development, behavior management, and other instructional strategies to determine how they were meeting the needs of District 75 students and how well they were working in tandem with the Department of Education's standards and goals, and
- Make recommendations and proposals for improving the overall effectiveness and efficiency of District 75.

The Work of the Strategic Support Team

To meet the goals and expectations for the project, the Council of the Great City Schools assembled a Strategic Support Team of experts with extensive experience in administering special education programs and first-hand knowledge and expertise with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA).

The Council has conducted nearly 150 instructional and noninstructional reviews of approximately 50 major urban school systems across the country over the last eight years.¹ These reviews are designed to help improve urban public education nationally and are conducted using a rigorous peer review process. They often result in substantial reforms and improvements in student achievement, organization, management, and operations in the big city school systems being reviewed.

The Strategic Support Team conducting this review of District 75 visited New York City on January 10-11, 2008, and again on February 10-13, 2008. The team interviewed a wide

¹ The Council's peer reviews are based on interviews of staff and others, a review of documents provided by the district, observations of classrooms and operations, and professional judgment. The teams conducting the interviews rely on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming, and make every effort to provide an objective assessment of district functions but cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by all interviewees.

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variety of people, including parents, advocates, parent advisory board members, related services staff members, special education teachers, regular education teachers, assistant principals, principals, District 75 leaders and administrators, central-office special education leaders, and union representatives. The team also visited a sampling of District 75 stand-alone schools, District 75 schools that were co-located with community schools, and programs that were not co-located with community schools.² The team also reviewed numerous documents and reports, including those pertaining to curricular strategies, related services, organizational charts, accountability systems, and reporting lines. In addition, the team analyzed data and developed initial recommendations and proposals. Finally, the team reviewed District 75 priorities and analyzed how well they aligned with the Department of Education's broader strategies and programs for students generally and for students with special needs in particular. At the conclusion of the final visit, the team shared its preliminary findings and proposals with Chancellor Klein and Deputy Chancellor Lyles.

It is important to note that the team did not look at everything that one could examine in this kind of review. This project does not entail an audit as such, itemizing every aspect of District 75 that could be described. In addition, the team did not devote time to determining to any great extent whether District 75 was in compliance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) or *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). Finally, the team did not examine operational details of District 75, that is, we did not look at the speed of evaluations and reevaluations, the adequacy of the Medicaid claiming system, the quality of the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), the nature of the due process and hearing system, and other issues. Many of these and other concerns can be found in other reports and reviews of the city's overall provision of services to students with disabilities. This report focuses instead on the overall strategic questions raised about District 75.

The Council's approach to reviewing urban school programs and providing technical assistance using small strategic support teams of senior managers from other urban school systems is unique to the organization and its members. The Council finds this approach effective for a number of reasons.

- ✓ It allows the top leaders of a school system to benefit from a fresh perspective and to work with a diverse set of experienced practitioners from around the country who have faced similar challenges.
- ✓ The recommendations developed by the team have power and credibility because the individuals who form the teams have encountered many of the same issues now facing the department or school system requesting the review. These individuals have first-hand experience working in urban school systems and have had the opportunity to test their approaches under rigorous and realistic circumstances.
- ✓ The use of senior urban school managers from other communities is faster and less expensive than retaining a large management-consulting firm that may not have the same practical

² Schools included PS 752Q, PS 12X, PS 168X, PS 188X, PS 370 @ PS 100, PS 811, PS 37R, and PS 25R.

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experience implementing programs or teaching students. It would be difficult for any school system to buy the level of expertise offered by these teams on the open market.

- ✓ Finally, the teams comprise a pool of expertise that the top school leaders—in this case the Chancellor and the Deputy Chancellor—may call upon for advice or help in implementing the recommendations, meeting new challenges, or developing alternate solutions.

Members of the Strategic Support Team included the following individuals—

| | |
|--|---|
| SUE GAMM Former Chief of Specialized Services Chicago Public Schools | ARNOLD VIRAMONTES Chief Transformation Officer Dallas Independent School District |
| CATHY ORLANDO Executive Director of Special Education, Curriculum and Interventions Miami-Dade Public Schools | JANE RHYNE Assistant Superintendent of Programs for Exceptional Children Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools |
| MICHAEL CASSERLY Executive Director Council of the Great City Schools | RICKI PRICE-BAUGH Director of Academic Achievement Council of the Great City Schools |
| JULIE WRIGHT HALBERT Legislative Counsel Council of the Great City Schools | |

Contents of this Report

Chapter 1 of this report presents a brief overview of District 75, including demographic information, achievement data, and a description of services. Chapter 2 presents findings and recommendations of the Strategic Support Team. These findings and recommendations are organized around four broad areas: Organizational Structure, Referral of Students to District 75, Teaching and Learning in District 75, and Accountability. Chapter 3 presents all recommendations in a single list to facilitate study and follow-up activities. Finally, Chapter 4 contains a synopsis and discussion of the team’s overall impressions and recommendations.

Appendix A includes data tables summarizing District 75 characteristics, staffing, and student achievement. Appendix B lists the individuals who were interviewed during one or both site visits either individually or in group settings. Appendix C lists the documents that the team reviewed. Appendix D presents the working agendas for the team during its site visits. Appendix E provides brief biographical sketches of the team members. Appendix F briefly describes the Council of the Great City Schools and lists all the Strategic Support Teams conducted by the organization over the last 10 years.

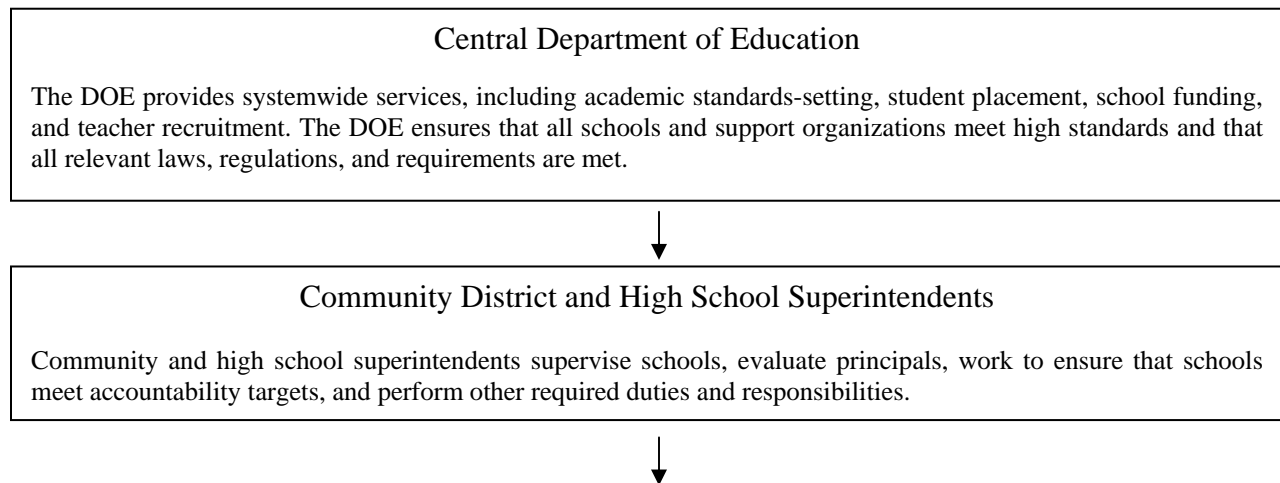
Chapter 1. Overview and Background

The New York City Department of Education is the largest school system in the nation, enrolling some 1.1 million students in about 1,400 schools. Approximately 65 percent of students attending the New York City Public Schools are eligible for a federal free or reduced-price lunch subsidy; about 12 percent are English language learners; and some 15 percent are students with disabilities. The system’s enrollment is about 38 percent Hispanic, 34 percent African American, 15 percent white, and some 13 percent Asian and other students.

The New York City schools are governed by the city’s mayor and his appointed chancellor, as are several other major city school systems across the nation. Together, the current mayor and chancellor embarked on a substantial reform effort in 2002 to overhaul the city’s schools under the banner of “Children First.” In its first phase, this effort involved restructuring the school system into 10 regions and reallocating additional resources to schools and classrooms. The system also sought to implement a more coherent program of instruction in core subjects and to spur parental involvement. In its second phase, the reforms entailed creation of a pilot “autonomy zone” where selected principals were given additional flexibility over personnel and budgets in exchange for greater accountability for results. By 2006-07, the program was expanded into the Empowerment Schools initiative with 332 schools.

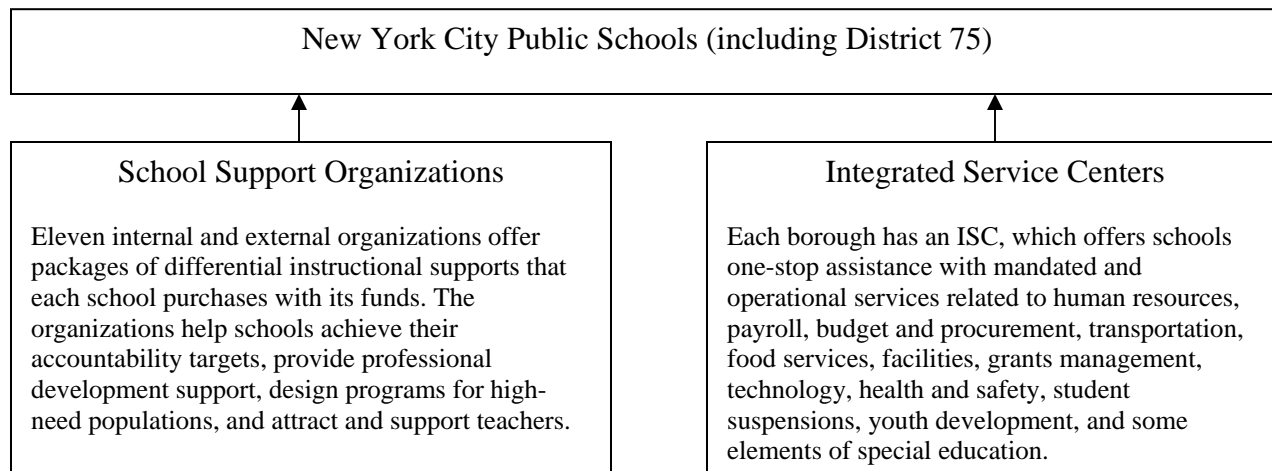
Today, all public schools in New York City are “empowered.” The reforms now involve a Fair Student Funding (FSF) formula (essentially a weighted-student formula); performance agreements for higher student achievement; greater school-by-school latitude over instructional strategies, hiring, budgeting, and scheduling; tailored assessments and professional development; a grading system for schools tied to progress in relation to systemwide averages and similar schools; and a series of school support organizations and integrated service centers to provide both operational and instructional assistance to schools. (See Exhibit 1.)

Exhibit 1. Organizational Schema of New York City Public Schools³



³ Source: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/DOEOrganization.htm>

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The city’s Children First program is built around three core themes: leadership, empowerment, and accountability. These themes translate to greater autonomy at the school site, more flexibility for staffing, budgeting and programming, and rewards and sanctions for results.

Overview of Special Education

Making these reforms work on behalf of students with disabilities is one of the city’s major challenges, one shared with other major urban school systems. New York City’s Department of Education (DOE) served a total of 180,890 students with disabilities (SWD) in 2006, the most recent year in which comprehensive data were available. Excluding private preschool children and those placed in private schools by their parents, 14.8 percent of students enrolled by the DOE were identified as needing special education services.⁴ Including those students, however, the DOE provides special education services to 11.2 percent of the city’s resident population. Some 146,700 of all children (81 percent) are school-aged students enrolled in DOE schools. Another 18,149 of these students—or 10 percent of the total—are enrolled in private preschools. And some 9 percent are enrolled in other DOE preschool programs, charter schools, parochial schools, and private and other nonpublic schools. (See Exhibit 2.)

Exhibit 2. Number and Percentage of Students with Disabilities by Service Location

| Service Location | Number | Percent | Service Location | Number | Percent |
|---|---------|---------|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| DOE Public Schools (school-aged) | 146,681 | 81.0% | Private Schools | 1,046 | 0.6% |
| DOE Public Schools (preschool) | 763 | 0.4% | Approved Nonpublic Schools | 7,445 | 4.1% |
| Charter Schools | 749 | 0.4% | Private Preschools | 18,149 | 10.0% |
| Parochial Schools | 6,057 | 3.3% | Totals | 180,890 | 100% |

⁴ The census for the Department of Education is based on a student population of 1,042,078 and 7,445 students placed by the Department in approved nonpublic schools. The incidence rate based on New York City’s estimated resident population was communicated by Department officials based on the state’s website. Note that the complexity of NYCDOE data and the variance of reporting categories often results in incidence rate data varying depending on the data reports utilized.

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Of the approximately 181,000 students with disabilities being served directly through the Department of Education, about 79.8 percent are served in community schools, approximately 12.7 percent are served in District 75, and the remaining are served in various nonpublic settings.

In general, the Department of Education's incidence rates for students with disabilities reflect state and national rates, but there is some variation from those averages. The rates of the New York City school system in the areas of learning disabilities, hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, and visual impairments are most similar to national and state averages. (See Appendix A, Table 4.) In two areas, however, the percentages of students served by the New York City school system are significantly higher than both state and national averages: speech/language impairment and autism. New York City educates 40.8 percent of the state's students with disabilities, but it serves 66.4 percent of the state's students with speech/language impairment and 67.6 percent of the state's students with autism.

Finally, the academic achievement of students with disabilities in the New York City school system is comparable to other large central city peers across the country. The tables below show the average reading and math scale scores of students with disabilities in New York City, compared with the nation; the large central city average; and participating cities in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP. (See Exhibits 3-6) .The tables also show the percentage of students with disabilities that scores at or above basic and at or above proficient levels of attainment in both subjects.

Exhibit 3. Rank Order of Average NAEP Reading Scale Scores of Fourth-Grade Students with Disabilities in New York, Compared with Other Major Cities, 2007

| Grade 4 | Average Scale Scores | Percentage at or above basic | Percentage at or above proficient |
|---|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nation | 190 | 36 | 13 |
| Large Central Cities⁵ | 178 | 25 | 9 |
| Atlanta | 191 | 33 | 14 |
| Austin | 190 | 36 | 14 |
| Charlotte | 187 | 32 | 12 |
| Boston | 183 | 20 | 5 |
| New York City | 181 | 23 | 7 |
| Houston | 174 | 20 | 8 |
| Chicago | 172 | 21 | 8 |
| San Diego | 171 | 21 | 7 |
| Cleveland | NA | NA | NA |
| Los Angeles | 166 | 19 | 5 |
| District of Columbia | 162 | 15 | 5 |

⁵ The Large Central Cities variable is based on a national random sample of public schools in cities with populations of 250,000 or more and includes cities not listed.

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Exhibit 4. Rank Order of Average NAEP Reading Scale Scores of Eighth-Grade Students with Disabilities in New York, Compared with Other Major Cities, 2007

| Grade 4 | Average Scale Scores | Percentage at or above basic | Percentage at or above proficient |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nation | 226 | 34 | 7 |
| Large Central Cities | 214 | 23 | 4 |
| Austin | 228 | 37 | 11 |
| Charlotte | 228 | 35 | 7 |
| Boston | 223 | 26 | 3 |
| Houston | 217 | 22 | 3 |
| New York City | 216 | 21 | 3 |
| San Diego | 214 | 25 | 4 |
| Chicago | 213 | 20 | 4 |
| Cleveland | 210 | 19 | 1 |
| District of Columbia | 210 | 19 | 4 |
| Los Angeles | 200 | 10 | 2 |
| Atlanta | NA | NA | NA |

Exhibit 5. Rank Order of Average NAEP Math Scale Scores of Fourth-Grade Students with Disabilities in New York, Compared with Other Major Cities, 2007

| Grade 4 | Average Scale Scores | Percentage at or above basic | Percentage at or above proficient |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nation | 220 | 60 | 19 |
| Large Central Cities | 208 | 44 | 13 |
| Austin | 226 | 66 | 23 |
| Charlotte | 222 | 59 | 19 |
| Boston | 214 | 51 | 8 |
| Houston | 214 | 51 | 10 |
| New York City | 213 | 50 | 12 |
| Atlanta | 207 | 38 | 13 |
| San Diego | 201 | 37 | 12 |
| Chicago | 196 | 27 | 10 |
| Los Angeles | 196 | 31 | 8 |
| District of Columbia | 188 | 20 | 3 |
| Cleveland | NA | NA | NA |

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Exhibit 6. Rank Order of Average NAEP Math Scale Scores of Eighth-Grade Students with Disabilities in New York, Compared with Other Major Cities, 2007

| Grade 4 | Average Scale Scores | Percentage at or above basic | Percentage at or above proficient |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nation | 246 | 33 | 8 |
| Large Central Cities | 233 | 22 | 4 |
| Charlotte | 256 | 41 | 12 |
| Austin | 252 | 38 | 13 |
| Boston | 247 | 30 | 7 |
| Houston | 240 | 23 | 5 |
| New York City | 235 | 20 | 2 |
| San Diego | 234 | 21 | 5 |
| Chicago | 228 | 18 | 3 |
| Cleveland | 222 | 10 | 0 |
| Los Angeles | 220 | 10 | 3 |
| District of Columbia | 211 | 7 | 1 |
| Atlanta | NA | NA | NA |

In general, students with disabilities in the New York City school system score higher in math than in reading and higher in the fourth grade than in the eighth, the same pattern that one sees when examining the achievement of nondisabled students. At the same time, the overall achievement levels suggest that students with disabilities enrolled in the New York City Public Schools do about as well as their disabled peers in other major cities.

District 75

The New York City school system differs in its approach to special education in one significant way, however. Within the Department of Education is a unique structure designed to meet the educational and other needs of city students with the most significant disabilities. That structure—District 75—was created more than 30 years ago as a “special” school district with its own superintendent, who serves alongside 32 other district superintendents. The District 75 operation in many ways resembles a New York Board of Cooperative Educational Services, which was devised to serve multiple school systems having too few students with disabilities for any of the individual systems to serve effectively on their own.

Of the total number of students with disabilities, some 22,000—or about 12.7 percent of all students with disabilities and about 2 percent of the Department’s total student enrollment—are served in public schools, at home, or in hospitals through District 75.⁶ The total number of students served through District 75 includes approximately 2,000 students in homebound or

⁶ Number of Students by School, Site and Programs of 1/2/2008 created on January 9, 2008, by Office of Data Management.

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hospital programs. About 1,890 students or 9.3 percent of those served by District 75 are fully included in general education classes on campuses that are co-located with community schools.

District 75 employs 56 principals who are each responsible for a “school” that can have multiple physical locations. The schools are located in 296 sites (excluding services in hospitals), and all but 26 of these sites are co-located with community schools.⁷ Each District 75 school has an average of 351 students, although the average enrollment is larger by about 30 students in Queens and the Bronx and is smaller by about 50 students in Manhattan. Several sites, however, serve significantly more students, with two schools serving more than 400 students and one serving more than 500. The average number of locations for each “school” is 5.3; Brooklyn has the highest average (7.8) and the Bronx, the lowest (4.3). (See Appendix A, Table 1.)

Principals of District 75 sites budget their numbers of assistant principals based on their school’s total enrollment. The principals have discretion to assign the assistant principals to school locations as appropriate. In addition, District 75 employs one principal for home instruction and one for hospital programs, each program having many sites throughout New York City. Some principals supervise hospital programs in addition to their Department of Education locations.

The Council’s examination of District 75 and its characteristics and services showed the following—

District 75 Students by Borough

The team’s analysis of the distribution of District 75 students indicated that students are educated in these schools at a fairly even rate across all boroughs—an average 2 percent of each borough’s student population. The fewest number of District 75 students (1,460) are located in Staten Island, although Staten Island has an incidence rate that is 25 percent higher than the citywide average and 39 percent higher than Manhattan’s (1.8 percent). (Appendix A, Table 2.)

District 75 Students by Grade Cluster

The team’s analysis also indicated that the largest proportion of District 75 students was enrolled in high school (41.5 percent). Manhattan had the highest percentage of its District 75 students in high school (50.8 percent), compared with Staten Island (33.7 percent), Queens (38.2 percent), the Bronx (40.9 percent), and Brooklyn (42.2 percent).

Students in grades 3-5 (20.9 percent) were served by District 75 in about the same proportion as were students in grades 6-8 (21.0 percent). The greatest variation by borough was found at grades 6-8 in Manhattan, which had 15.7 percent of its District 75 students in that grade span, compared with Staten Island’s rate of 23.6 percent and the Bronx’s rate of 23.7 percent.

District 75 serves an average of 15.9 percent of its students in the K-2 grade cluster—with the Bronx serving 17.3 percent of its students in these grades, Staten Island serving 17.1 percent, Queens serving 16.8 percent, Brooklyn serving 14.8 percent, and Manhattan serving 13.5 percent. (See Appendix A, Table 3.)

⁷ Source: Bonnie Brown, D75 Superintendent, February 26, 2008

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District 75 Students by Type of Disability

The vast majority (76 percent) of students with autism are served through District 75, which also serves the majority of the city's students with multiple disabilities (63 percent) and those with mental retardation (56 percent). (See Appendix A, Table 5 for comparisons of the number and proportion of students by disability category in District 75 and non-District 75 schools, including those that are nonpublic.)

The data in Table 5 also indicate that four disability groups comprise 87 percent of the 20,125 students enrolled in school-based District 75 programs: those with emotional disabilities (33 percent), autism (24 percent), mental retardation (18 percent), and multiple disabilities (12 percent).

In addition, the number of students served in District 75 has increased over time: 2,008 more students were enrolled in FY 2007 than in FY 2003. This increase appears to be due to an increase of 520 students with mental retardation and 1,431 students with autism.

The number of autistic and other children requiring small classes also increased: 164 autistic students (.75 percent of all District 75 students), for instance, requiring an 8:1:1 class in FY 2003, compared with 358 autistic students (1.6 percent) requiring such classes in FY 2007.⁸ The number of District 75 students of all categories, moreover, requiring 6:1:1 classes increased from 2,529 (11.5 percent) in FY 2003 to 3,478 students (15.6 percent) in FY 2007. The numbers of all District 75 students needing 8:1:1 classes also increased from 1,354 students (6.2 percent) to 1,783 (8.0 percent). On the other hand, the number of District 75 students needing a 12:1:4 program remained generally steady over the same period. And the 12:1:1 program decreased in size from 9,552 students (43.6 percent) in FY 2003 to 9,488 students (42.3 percent) in FY 2007, although there were spikes in between that reached 10,326 students (46.2 percent) in FY 2004.⁹

District 75 Student Achievement

Approximately 61 percent of District 75 students were assessed in English language arts and mathematics on the New York State Alternative Assessments (NYSAA) in FY 2007; the remaining 39 percent were assessed using the standard assessment.¹⁰

Approximately 49 percent of students taking the standard assessment, however, scored at level 1 in English language arts, the lowest performance level. Some 40 percent scored at level 2, and approximately 12 percent of District 75 students scored at levels 3 or 4, the two highest achievement levels.

In addition, some 55 percent of District 75 students taking the standard assessment scored at level 1 in math. Approximately 28 percent scored at level 2, and the remaining 17.6 percent scored at either level 3 or 4. (See Exhibit 7.) A list of English language arts and math scores

⁸ Source: Report by Office of Data Management, Tables 1 and 6, October 23, 2007.

⁹ Source: Report by Office of Data Management, Table 1, October 23, 2007

¹⁰ See Appendix A, Tables 19 and 20. These data include early childhood (EC) pupils who are projected to take either a standard or alternative assessment in the future but have not done so yet.

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school-by-school in District 75 is presented in Appendix A, Table 18. The team did not receive data on the results from the alternative testing of students in District 75.

Exhibit 7. Percent of District 75 Students Scoring at Various Performance Levels on Standardized Assessments, 2007¹¹

| Subject | Number Tested | Percent Level 1 | Percent Level 2 | Percent Level 3 + 4 |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| English language arts | 4,879 | 48.6 | 39.7 | 11.7 |
| Mathematics | 4,875 | 54.8 | 27.5 | 17.6 |

At Issue

Organizationally, District 75 has not looked out of place in a citywide school system that was often noted for its silos and bureaucracy. But the recent organizational changes in the school system under Chancellor Klein have called into question whether District 75 is now congruent with the larger structure and goals of the Department of Education and whether changes need to be made.

The changes have been substantial. Principals have been empowered to choose the school support organization (SSO) they believe will provide the instructional support that best meets the needs of their students. Five borough-based Integrated Service Centers (ISCs) now provide one-stop assistance for business services, and School Support Organizations (SSOs) provide the curricular and instructional support. The structure of District 75, however, did not change under this transformation except that its administrative support operations moved to the Queens ISC. The questions emerging from these changes are whether District 75 is in sync with the larger school system and its reforms, and whether it should be.

In addition, the Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Initiatives (OSEI) has overall responsibility for the development of citywide policy and procedures, compliance management, technical assistance, capacity building, and proposal writing. It also seeds new programs for students with disabilities in community schools but not in District 75, which operates as a separate division dedicated solely to students with the most significant disabilities. One sees this organizational separation both at the top of the school system and at the ground level. For instance, District 75 principals directly supervise all special educators and most service providers of District 75 students, regardless of whether they are placed in separate or general education classes. The result is that regular principals have little responsibility for students with the most significant disabilities. The issue at hand, in this case, is whether services for children are adequately coordinated and administered in the most effective and efficient manner.

¹¹ Level 1 (Not Meeting Learning Standards): Student performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level. Level 2 (Partially Meeting Learning Standards): Student performance demonstrates a partial understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level. Level 3 (Meeting Learning Standards): Student Performance demonstrates an understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level. Level 4 (Meeting Learning Standards with Distinction): Student Performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

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The unique nature of District 75 rests not in the students it serves, because all major city school systems serve similar children, but in its organization and reporting structure—and what its implications are for the quality of services to the city's youngsters with the most significant disabilities. The structure of District 75 differs markedly from the special education framework seen in other middle-to-large city public school systems across the country. Typically, these urban school systems rely on a single special education division with administrators and teachers with specialized expertise to provide the support, instruction, and technical assistance for students with the most significant disabilities that New York City provides separately through District 75. In addition, special school principals in other cities are normally assigned only to buildings that do not house general education classes. Otherwise, principals of schools educating students with significant disabilities either in general or separate classes are responsible for *all* teachers and students in their schools.

In the opinion of the Strategic Support Team assembled for this project, the structure and organization of District 75 offers both pluses and minuses. The advantages rest in District 75's ability to concentrate solely on students with significant disabilities who need the most help. District 75 can focus on and advocate for its students in ways that a more integrated approach might not lend itself to. On the other hand, the structure of District 75 polarizes the Department of Education's responsibilities for the neediest students in co-located schools. Its separate reporting structure for teachers of District 75 students also perpetuates and reinforces (with exceptions) a culture of separateness and isolation rather than one of inclusiveness. A single, unitary system would not guarantee inclusiveness, to be sure, but the polarization of services and the isolation of students are more pronounced in the New York City school system than in other major urban school systems known to the team.

The question at this point involves how to better integrate District 75 into the broader reforms of the school system. The leadership of the Department of Education has a number of obvious choices. It could do nothing. It could dismantle District 75 and fold it into the overall special education operation as is the case in most other cities. Or it could do something entirely different. The team recommends the latter option and does not propose to dismantle, eliminate, or subsume District 75. Instead, we propose strategies that seek to balance the need to integrate services with the imperative to provide services to students who too often can be overlooked and ignored if not given dedicated attention.

We seek to improve the effectiveness of District 75 by spurring its contributions to the larger reforms, improving its coordination with the community schools, aligning its structure, better integrating its students, and strengthening its effectiveness. The team grounds its proposals on the expertise of District 75 administrators and staff and its support among many parents, community-school staff members, and unions. But the proposals demand better results, stronger accountability, and more integration of services on behalf of its students and their future. The team believes that the Department of Education can accomplish much of what it seeks to without dismantling District 75, but any decision to retain the district should be revisited from time to time to ensure that it is really working in tandem with the city's larger reforms. The subsequent chapter presents the team's detailed findings and proposals.

Chapter 2. Findings and Recommendations

The Council's Strategic Support Team presents a series of findings and recommendations to the New York City Department of Education. They are organized around four broad areas: Organizational Structure and Operations, Referral of Students to District 75, Teaching and Learning in District 75, and Accountability. Chapter 3 of this report lists all recommendations, and Chapter 4 provides a synopsis and discussion of the team's investigations and their implications.

A. Organizational Structure and Operations

The New York City Department of Education runs two separate organizational operations to provide services to students with disabilities in the city's schools. This unusual practice has a number of effects—both positive and negative.

Positive Findings

- District 75 has a unique and strong foundation of political support for its services and organizational structure among parents, many teachers, union officials, and advocates.
- District 75 has had its own independent organizational structure in place for decades, with consistent administrative leadership.
- District 75's stable structure and personnel have enabled parents to have a clear understanding of whom to contact for assistance and has allowed staff members in the district to develop a deep level of expertise.
- Most of District 75's schools are co-located in buildings with community schools.
- Nurses and psychologists serve all students in a school building, regardless of whether those students attend community or District 75 schools.
- The team visited a number of schools and heard about others in which co-located principals at the community and District 75 schools have good working relationships and support the creation and maintenance of classes that include students with disabilities.
- More than 1,800 of about 22,000 District 75 students are educated full time in general education classes in co-located buildings.

Areas of Concern

1. ***Bifurcated System of Special Education Management.*** The management of the city's special education services is bifurcated, with students with the most significant disabilities served in one division—District 75—and all other students with disabilities served by the community schools. Both operations, however, fall under the Department of Education.

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- ***Oversight of Special Education Services.*** The community schools and District 75 have operated as separate and distinct operations for many years. Collaboration is weak between the leadership of District 75 and the Office of Special Education Initiatives (OSEI). The two units do not offer a continuum of services in a seamless and transparent manner; there is duplication of effort; and the line of responsibilities delineating the two operations is blurred. The OSEI sets overall policy and procedures, but has no supervisory authority for special education services in either the community schools or in District 75.
- ***Role and Mission of District 75.*** The mission of District 75 is not always clear and distinct. For example, The New York City Department of Education's Web site and various documents have conflicting information about the role of District 75 and the types of students that it educates.
 - ✚ The District 75 Web site states that its mission, in part, is "...to provid[e] appropriate standards-based educational programs with related-service supports to approximately 22,000 students with ***moderate to significant challenges***, commensurate with their abilities." (Emphasis added.)
 - ✚ *Students with Disabilities Transitioning from Preschool to School-Age Programs: An Orientation Guide 2007-2008* describes District 75 as serving deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually disabled, and ***more significantly*** disabled children ... who require greater structure and more intensive learning environments.
 - ✚ New York City's *Continuum of Services for Students with Disabilities*, on the other hand, contains a somewhat different but more explicit description of students served by District 75. It states that these students:
 - Have ***significant*** disabilities and/or ***limited*** cognitive abilities combined with ***physical limitations***.
 - Require ***highly specialized*** educational, social, psychological and medical services.
 - May experience significant speech, language, perceptual-cognitive and/or emotional impairments that interfere with learning.
 - May have extremely fragile physiological conditions, potentially requiring personal care, physical/verbal supports, prompts, and/or assistive technology devices.
 - May {in some cases} require a focus on independent living skills, a modified curriculum and alternate performance indicators, a therapeutic environment, or community-based instruction.

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The differences in these descriptions have contributed to confusion in the field about the role that District 75 is supposed to play in the education of students with disabilities. This confusion may be contributing to inappropriate referrals.

- ***Perceptions about the Capacity of Community Schools.*** The bifurcation of services—and the sometimes tension between divisions—has contributed to a pervasive belief among many that the community schools lack the conviction, knowledge, resources, and potential to support students with disabilities and that only District 75 has the personnel, skills, and knowledge to serve students with the most challenging needs.

✚ A widespread perception exists that only District 75 administrators and staff have the expertise necessary to address the needs of students with more challenging needs. Many community-school principals echo this belief. Many teachers and parents interviewed by the team voiced concerns that the number of special education students in general education classes would actually decline—and the number of co-located sites would decrease— if District 75 did not exist.

✚ Nearly universal belief also exists that only District 75 principals have the necessary skills to effectively supervise teachers of students with significant disabilities. Whereas a few community-school principals shared this belief, some principals interviewed by team expressed the idea that they didn’t have the capacity to serve students with significant disabilities in co-located schools. This bifurcated structure has resulted in substantial organizational and operational polarization between community schools and District 75 administration, staff, and parents that in too many cases has led to a paradigm of *us vs. them* in co-located sites. This polarization has reinforced a feeling of disenfranchisement among parents of District 75 students, and further separates students with significant disabilities from their community-school peers.

✚ When parents and staff members sense that a District 75 principal is unable to obtain equitable services (e.g., access to the cafeteria, gym, library, resource rooms, auditoriums, art and music rooms, etc.) for his or her students in a co-located building, they often believe that they would have even less power to obtain such services if a community-school principal were responsible for students with significant disabilities.

These perceptions are balanced by the views of some who are concerned about the existence of a separate and “segregated” school district for students with the most significant disabilities and would like to see the level of communication and coordination between District 75 and community schools increase significantly.

- ***School Support Organizations for District 75 Schools.*** Although District 75 principals can choose to join any of 11 internal and external School Support Organizations (SSOs) offering packages of differentiated instructional support, professional development,

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programs for high-needs populations, and teacher recruitment and support, all but one principal chose to use District 75 as its SSO instead.¹²

- ✚ It is understandable that District 75 principals would choose to continue using District 75 for professional development and support, but this pattern of choices further separates District 75 from its community-school peers, including those with whom it shares buildings.
- ✚ About 61 percent of District 75 students are taking or will take the state’s alternative assessments, and about 39 percent are taking or will take the standard assessment.¹³ But District 75 provides all professional development on the general education curriculum and standards, because the district acts as its own SSO. The opportunity to interact with and gain the perspectives of community-school principals, administrators, and staff is generally unavailable in this District 75-only SSO configuration.
- ✚ Although some District 75 principals have sought out and used their discretionary funds to pay for additional training that is more inclusive, they are not required to do so.
- ***Separate Support and Operational Structures.*** The two major support units for the city’s public schools are not used by or integrated into the work of District 75.
 - ✚ ***Integrated Service Centers.*** District 75 has its own Integrated Service Center (ISC) that operates out of the general Queens ISC.¹⁴ The Queens unit provides budget, procurement, and payroll services. The team did not receive any information, however, describing why a centralized ISC for District 75 was better or more efficient than a series of decentralized centers like the five regular ISCs that serve the rest of the larger school system.
 - ✚ ***Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations.*** The Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations (OSEPO) has offices in each ISC to handle special education placements outside of a student’s home school, but District 75 placements are centralized in one office. The team did not receive any information that explained why the District 75 placement process needed to be centralized and could not be performed within each borough alongside OSEPO staff.

¹² The one District 75 school that did not choose District 75 as its SSO—the Children’s School—is a unique school where all students are fully included in general education classes with a principal with a high degree of knowledge and expertise.

¹³ See Appendix A, Tables 19 and 20. These data include early childhood (EC) pupils who are projected to take either a standard or alternative assessment in the future but have not done so yet.

¹⁴ Each ISC is supposed to have a special education team consisting of a director of special education services, a special education administration manager, operations manager, and three administrative and operations specialists. The ISC team also has clinical experts, an individualized education plan (IEP) manager, six IEP specialists, a transportation liaison, two special education analysts, a manager of contracting and related service authorization, supervisors of school psychologists, speech teachers, occupational therapists, and physical therapists, staff attorneys, and clerical support personnel.

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- ✦ **Data Services.** District 75 operates its own data system without substantial integration with the school system's main databank.
- **Poor Functional Alignment.** The organization of District 75 is not consistent with the structure of the larger Department of Education.
 - ✦ Job categories and descriptions in District 75 are inconsistent with those of the larger Department of Education. For example, deputies, assistant superintendents, and directors are shown at the same level on the organizational chart. It is also not clear whether "executive directors" under the Department of Education have the same rank as executive directors under District 75, and vice versa.
 - ✦ Spans of control among supervisors in District 75 are relatively wide and sometimes inconsistent. For example, the deputy superintendent of District 75 has 15 "direct reports" on the 2007-08 organizational chart.
 - ✦ Generally, District 75 operates as a separate district inside the Department of Education that, on the whole, is inconsistent in structure and functioning with the larger system of schools. Members of the Strategic Support Team know of no other large city that has a comparable division.
- **Web Site Resources.** The New York City Department of Education offers a wealth of resources for educating students with disabilities, as well as students with challenging or disruptive behavior. The department's home page does not offer, however, a single point of entry for those seeking information on special education. Instead, there are three separate sites with information on special education:
 - ✦ Under "Academics," there is a Special Education page¹⁵ with links to committees on special education, parent and educator resources, and a link to District 75.
 - ✦ Under "Offices and Programs," there are three links. One links to the Special Education page described above. Another links to District 75's home page.¹⁶ And a third links to OESI.¹⁷ Neither the District 75 page nor the OESI page refers to the other or to the generic special education page under "Academics."
- 2. **Management of Co-located Schools.** The separation of services and oversight at the top of the Department of Education is reflected all the way down to the schools, where separately managed co-located District 75 and community schools are common.
 - **Principal Accountability.** Community-school principals have little responsibility for District 75 students in their schools, even if these students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) require participation in general education classes.

¹⁵ <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/default.htm>

¹⁶ <http://schools.nyc.gov/OurSchools/District75/default.htm>

¹⁷ <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/SchoolImprovement/default.htm>

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- ✦ ***Ad Hoc Negotiations.*** Disputes over the implementation of IEPs are negotiated on a case-by-case basis at the school level and can depend on the informal, personal relationships between District 75 and community-school principals. There are neither incentives for inclusiveness nor consequences for a failure to include students in the general education program.
- ✦ ***Informality of IEPs.*** It was reported to the team that some District 75 principals prefer not to put general education participation on the IEPs, because they may not be able to ensure implementation of this practice. As a result, such participation tends to be more informal and outside the IEP process.
- ***Building-Council Effectiveness.*** The Department of Education created Building Councils, in part, to resolve disputes among schools principals. There is a building council team within the Office of Portfolio Development that has had some success in resolving disputes. A tool kit has been developed and provided to principals at the sites to help resolve multi-school issues and an “escalation” memo has been issued to schools on how to move unresolved issues up the ladder for ultimate resolution. The Council’s team, however, received considerable comment from those interviewed that these mechanisms did not always function well in ensuring dispute resolution.
- ✦ The team was told that community-school principals can exert control over access to various areas of their buildings to the detriment of District 75 students. The team heard numerous complaints about District 75 students who do not have equitable access to school facilities and activities at a reasonable hour or at all. These facilities include gymnasiums, lunch rooms, libraries, and media centers and these activities include art and music. The team also saw and heard examples of very young students with disabilities attending classes on upper floors (including at least one class on upper floors in a building without elevators).
- ✦ Although District 75 administrators, staff members, and parents understand that there are complex issues related to co-located sites, they share a deep frustration that they have to fight in order to achieve equitable access to facilities or to general education classes. (See Section 5, Impact on Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)).
- ✦ The team also received comments indicating that if a co-located community school’s enrollment increases, District 75 students may be required to transfer to another location. The team visited one co-located school near where a new apartment complex will be opening next year. District 75 staff anticipated drastic cuts in the number of special education students that the school can accommodate because the children of new residents would displace District 75 students.
- ✦ Interviewees indicated that the “central office” would impose resolutions for disputes between principals, if necessary, but could not provide examples of where this occurred. Given the many anecdotes the team heard about unresolved issues, it seems that a more systemic, effective, and consistent mechanism should be put in place to investigate and address unresolved disputes and to ensure that students with disabilities have equitable access to programs and activities in co-located buildings.

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- ***Separate from Community School.*** Even District 75 students who are fully included in a general education program are sometimes perceived as not being “part of” the community school.
 - ✚ The team was told that if a District 75 student who was otherwise included in the general education program was involved in an incident that required the attention of a community-school principal, the District 75 principal or administrator was expected to address the issue. Although some community-school principals become involved anyway, this involvement was not the expected practice.
 - ✚ A principal interviewed by the team who attempted to showcase how well his District 75 children had been included in the general program was told by a quality reviewer that this inclusion was not relevant to his quality-school review. Officials from the Department of Education, however, indicated that the quality reviewer may have made this statement in error.
3. ***Impact on Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).*** The bifurcation of services also extends down to the student level.
- ***Unrealized Opportunities for Interaction.*** The collocation of District 75 and community schools affords opportunities for planned and natural interactions between District 75 students and their nondisabled peers that would not exist if District 75 students were educated in buildings solely attended by students with disabilities. However, such opportunities are not leveraged to the extent that one might reasonably expect.
 - ✚ ***Separated Classrooms.*** The team was told in the interviewing process that District 75 classrooms were sometimes located intentionally apart from those of the community school. The team also saw this in its school visits. This configuration contrasts with best practices, i.e., special classes are placed in close proximity to students at comparable grade levels and special wings are avoided. This proximity allows for natural interaction and opportunities for students to attend general education classes as appropriate with minimum disruption. The practice also facilitates easy access for general education students to provide “buddy” interactions in special classes.
 - ✚ ***High Rates of Restrictiveness.*** The Department of Education has a higher proportion of students in separate schools than do other school systems in New York State or in the four other large cities in the state. (See Exhibit 8.)
 - That proportion is 38 percent higher than that of other school systems in the state overall and 54 percent higher than that of the next four largest cities in the state.
 - New York City uses self-contained classes at a higher rate and general education classes at a lower rate, compared with the state and the four other large cities.

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- New York's State Performance Plan submitted to the U.S. Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reported that the state missed the following federal targets:
 - *More than 55 percent* of students are removed from regular classes < 21 percent of the day;
 - *Less than 26 percent* of students are removed from regular classes > 60 percent of the day;
 - *Less than 6.5 percent* of students are in public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound or hospital placements.

According to officials from the New York State Department of Education, the agency has a goal by 2010 of a proportion of 4.5 percent for the "separate school" category. Further these officials reported that the New York City Department of Education was classified as *In Need of Intervention* on that category.

Exhibit 8. NY State Performance Plan for 2006-2007 Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Data for Students with Disabilities 6-21 Years of Age

| Sites of Comparison | % of Removal from Regular Ed. | | | Separate Schools |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------|-------|------------------|
| | < 21% | 21-60% | >60% | |
| NY State | 53.1% | 12.9% | 24.6% | 6.8% |
| NYC | 48.9% | 4.0% | 34.5% | 9.4% |
| Large 4 NY Cities | 55.0% | 9.8% | 27.2% | 6.1% |

✚ *Student Integration.*

- District 75 data show that about 1,800 students are included in full-time general education classes. Survey data are also available showing the extent to which District 75 students in separate classes in co-located buildings interacted with community-school peers. Exhibit 9 shows that:

Exhibit 9. Number of Periods per Week District 75 Students in Specialized Classes in Co-located Buildings Interact with Community-School Peers¹⁸

| Activity | 0 Classes/Wk | | 1 to 10 Classes/Wk | | 11 to 20 Classes/Wk | | 21 to 40 Classes/Wk | | Total |
|---------------------|--------------|-----|--------------------|-----|---------------------|------|---------------------|-------|--------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | |
| Instruction Periods | 14,774 | 97% | 428 | 3% | 16 | 0.1% | 16 | 0.11% | 15,234 |
| Gym & Cafeteria | 6,090 | 40% | 8,360 | 55% | 768 | 5% | 16 | 0.11% | 15,234 |

¹⁸ LRE - Mainstreaming survey of 3R, 4R, 5R, and 6R programs housed in general education buildings (3/2008)

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- Apart from students in full-time inclusive classes, very few of the 15,234 District 75 students in co-located buildings interact with nondisabled student for academic instruction: 3 percent (428) of students interact between 1 and 10 classes a week; and 0.21 percent (32) students interact for 11 to 40 classes a week.
- In gym and the cafeteria, 55 percent (8,360) of District 75 students are integrated with community-school students between 1 and 10 classes a week; 5 percent (768) do so between 11 to 20 classes a week and 0.11 percent (16) do so between 21 and 40 classes a week.
- ***Lack of Planning for Inclusion.*** No real expectation exists that community and District 75 principals will plan strategically and jointly to increase the interaction of students in co-located schools or to increase the number of District 75 students attending general education classes or community-school special education classes.
 - ✚ The relationships between community-school and District 75 principals and staff vary from school to school, but community-school principals are viewed as the gatekeepers for District 75 students' inclusionary opportunities and practices.
 - ✚ All community-school principals are not necessarily expected to take steps to facilitate inclusionary practices for students with significant disabilities. There seems to be a general *all or nothing* sense among staff interviewed that District 75 students are either in the District 75 program or they are not. There does not appear to be a perceived middle ground where District 75 students could be integrated into classes for one, two, or more periods a week other than on a periodic basis.
- ***Institutional Barriers to Inclusion.*** A number of other factors also serve as barriers to more inclusive instruction of District 75 students.
 - ✚ ***Time of School Year.*** It was reported to the team that it is difficult to move District 75 students into general education classrooms once the school year began.
 - ✚ ***Class Size.*** It also appears that because District 75 students are not on the community-school register, their participation in a community-school class may increase class sizes over acceptable levels.
 - ✚ ***Expectations.*** Individuals interviewed by the team indicated that District 75 students are not always included in new high schools, although the Department of Education has a written policy stating that "all high schools must accept Special Education students..." Schools may be misinterpreting this policy, however, as not including District 75 students because they are not explicitly mentioned.
 - ✚ ***Preschool Services.*** Focus group members indicated that there were a relatively small number of sites to support integrated services for District 75 preschoolers. Of all age groups, this one offers some of the best opportunities for and benefits from inclusive activities.

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4. ***Bifurcated System of Related Services.*** The bifurcated system also extends to “related services.” The team heard convincing evidence that the policy of having separate systems for delivering related services was neither effective nor efficient. For example, District 75 and community schools’ related-service providers for social work, speech/language, occupational therapy (OT), and physical therapy (PT) services are responsible for providing services only to students in their own co-located schools. This finding is especially noteworthy in that significant staff shortages were reported for District 75 in the areas of speech/language services, OT, and PT. (Staff shortages are discussed in Section C. Teaching and Learning.)

- ***Equitable Caseloads.*** It appears difficult to balance caseloads among related-service providers at co-located schools. Some community-school and District 75 principals reported that they manage imbalances by informally assigning students between community school and District 75 service providers regardless of the students’ school, but this practice appears to be the exception rather than the rule or the goal. In the case of OT, for example, a perception exists that caseloads are higher for District 75 students than for community-school students, and that supervisor caseloads are higher as well. Absent an overall system for assigning caseloads and supervising their provision at a given site, it is difficult to manage an operation that could work toward equitable caseloads and supervision of them.

- ✚ According to several District 75 staff members interviewed by the team, community school principals are the “rating officials” (i.e., evaluators) for psychologists even when the District 75 co-located school has more students with disabilities than the community school. Some District 75 interviewees saw this as inequitable access to psychological services.

- ✚ The team was informed, however, that the Department of Education’s agreement with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) was that a school psychologist’s rating official is the principal of the school where the psychologists spends the majority of his or her days regardless of whether that school is a District 75 or a community school. Furthermore, school psychologists are assigned based on the evaluation workload at each school, not the school register. Therefore, a District 75 school may have a larger register but a smaller evaluation workload because the school does not have any initial referrals, which require more time to complete than re-evaluations.

- ***Travel Time.*** When two sets of related-service providers work at the same school, the number of students each serves requires more itinerant than full-time scheduling. As a result, providers must spend more time traveling between schools. Such travel is especially nonproductive given potential staff shortages.
- ***Inclusion Classes.*** Ironically, the bifurcation of special education and related services is most evident among District 75 students included full time in a community school’s general education classes. In this case, two service providers may work with two sets of students in the same class, those who attend the community school and those attending District 75. (This topic is discussed further in Section 5, Impact on LRE.)

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- **Expanding Expertise.** A number of service providers expressed the desire to learn about the provision of services for students with differing levels of disabilities in order to expand the providers’ expertise and to make their jobs more interesting and fulfilling. Meeting this need cannot be facilitated easily under the current structure.
 - **Professional Development.** Separate systems also exist for related-services professional development (District 75 and community schools). Differentiated training is necessary to address differing staff roles, levels of knowledge, experience, etc. Even within District 75, however, providers may work exclusively with students having distinctly different needs. However, core information is available that could be useful to all providers in a given clinical area and that could support a more comprehensive professional development approach, including differentiated opportunities.
5. **Home and Hospital Services.** District 75 manages services for students receiving services at home and in hospital settings, including students who have no disabilities. The team did not receive much information about these services, but it did not appear that the management of home/hospital services was closely aligned with the mission of District 75.

Recommendations for Organizational Structure and Operations

The Strategic Support Team is recommending that the New York City Department of Education move toward a “universal design” for delivery of its special education services. By this, we mean the use of a broad and unified strategy with a series of multiple approaches for meeting the needs of diverse learners. Our recommendations for such a design are based on the following principles—

- **A vision and mission** that includes appropriate interventions and supports for all students with disabilities, regardless of setting.
- **High standards of performance** that clearly articulate expectations for the achievement of students with disabilities in a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).
- **Data-driven instruction** for all students with disabilities, regardless of setting, and high-quality professional development for teachers based on that data.
- **Seamless integration of services** on behalf of all students with disabilities and collaboration among stakeholders on behalf of those students, regardless of their direct involvement with either the community or the District 75 schools.
- **Strong accountability** for results with incentives and consequences that apply to the instruction and support of students with disabilities, regardless of setting.
- **Autonomy and school empowerment** coupled with aggressive capacity building to serve students with disabilities, regardless of setting and consistent with the reforms being pursued throughout the city.

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The Strategic Support Team does not believe that District 75 needs to be eliminated to achieve these principles. But the team has a number of recommendations about how these principles could be better achieved on behalf of students with disabilities in both community schools and in District 75. They include the following—

- ✓ Retain District 75 but clearly define its core mission and role as part of a universal and integrated system for the provision of instruction and services to students with disabilities citywide. As an initial step, the team proposes that the Department of Education and District 75—
 - Define and post clear and consistent definitions about District 75's role and purposes, and clarify the eligibility of students and the criteria for placement or referral to a District 75 program or school. As part of this clarification, the Department should review the standards for placement in the *Continuum of Services* document and determine whether modifications are needed.
 - Clarify standards for enabling students with disabilities to leave District 75 programs or schools when appropriate. As part of this process, the Department should clearly describe the circumstances, rules, and criteria for transitioning students from District 75 to community schools. The process should also include a description of procedures for continuing technical assistance to District 75 students who have successfully transitioned to general-education classes either fully or partially. Finally, the Department may wish to field-test the new criteria for transitions before fully implementing these criteria citywide to ensure clarity, consistency, accountability, and operability.
 - Ensure that all written materials, brochures, Web site information, program descriptions, and the like are updated and made consistent once this review is complete.
- ✓ Redesign the provision of special education citywide to reflect a series of systemic and universal services and supports for students with disabilities.
 - ***Conduct a Structured Review of and Integrate Special Education Practice.*** Charge an individual who would report directly to the Deputy Chancellor and to whom the OSEI and District 75 would report with working with appropriate community-school, District 75, and OSEI staff members to develop a coordinated and seamless system of practice for all disabled students citywide. This individual should have a deep understanding of special education programming and management and would be charged with overseeing the implementation of recommendations contained in this report. Finally, the individual would be charged with establishing a series of cross-functional teams from both the Department of Education and District 75 to work on the following—
 - ✚ ***Standards.*** Teams from District 75, the community schools, the OSEI, and others from the Teaching and Learning division should be charged with developing a clear set of differentiated academic and behavioral standards or interventions for students with disabilities across the city, regardless of location.

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- ✚ **Professional Development.** Teams should also examine the professional development provided to teachers inside and outside District 75 to ensure that it is capable of improving outcomes for students. In addition, the teams should look at ways to improve the interactions and collaborations of District 75 as a School Support Organization (SSO) with other SSOs in the provision of professional development. Professional development, in general, should align with the goals of the school system and District 75, and should emphasize the capacity of schools to provide students with disabilities with the most inclusionary instructional setting possible. The outcome should benefit community-school staff as much as District 75 staff.
- ✚ **Data.** Teams involving District 75, community schools, the OSEI, and information technology (IT) unit, moreover, should focus on the acquisition and integration of data and plan for joint analysis and reporting.
- ✚ **Personnel.** Cross-functional teams—with representation from the human resources unit—should also be assigned to work on personnel issues, including staff shortages, related-services personnel, hiring and retention, staff utilization, and personnel placement issues.
- ✚ **Home and Hospital Program.** Finally, a cross-functional team should review the home and hospital program and determine whether it should remain under the management of District 75.

An alternative to this proposal of having District 75 and OSEI leaders report to a new person in order to better integrate services would be to charge the Deputy Chancellor with overseeing the integration of services and holding the heads of both operations accountable for that integration.

- ✓ Reorganize District 75 so it is more congruent with the structure of the Department of Education.
 - Have the heads of District 75 and OSEI report to a single individual who would, in turn, report to the Deputy Chancellor of Teaching and Learning.
 - Flatten and standardize the spans of central control of supervisors under District 75 and OSEI.
 - Standardize job titles and levels in District 75 to make them more consistent with the same or similar titles and levels in the Department of Education.
 - Conduct a functional analysis of positions within District 75 and determine whether there is unnecessary duplication of services, whether some services could be integrated, or whether there is good reason to retain the seeming duplication.
- ✓ Decentralize the functions of the District 75 Integrated Service Center and the Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations.

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- Analyze the operations and placement processes of the District 75 Integrated Service Center (ISC), and determine how they could be integrated and decentralized into the work of each borough ISC and Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations. (OSEPO) division.¹⁹
- Identify schools within each SSO having promising collocation practices in order to define new professional development activities and to serve as demonstration sites.
- ✓ Standardize and integrate Web site information for all special education services and supports.
 - Review all Department of Education Web sites offering information about special education resources to ensure a universal entry port providing easy access and linkages to all pertinent information relating to students with disabilities.
 - Clearly describe which career and technical education programs are available for District 75 and community-school students to avoid inappropriate placements. (See Section B, Referral to District 75, 4. Referral Trends, District 75 Community-Based Vocational Instruction.)
- ✓ Set clearer expectations and rules for the interactive and collaborative management of co-located schools.
 - Develop clearer standards and procedures by which co-located school principals and staff maximize the inclusion of disabled students in general education classes; improve the interaction of disabled and nondisabled students; and ensure equitable access to lunchrooms, gyms, libraries, programs and activities, etc. Include standards for the location of classes for younger children that would apply to all Department of Education schools.
 - Revise the responsibilities of community-school “host” principals as necessary to encourage a more inclusive and supportive environment for students with disabilities. (See Section D below.)
- ✓ Review the Building-Council process in order to ensure—
 - Timely and equitable resolution of disputes among building managers.
 - A clearly understood process of mediation, arbitration, appeal, and external review, if necessary, of decision-making when there is a dispute that could not be resolved or that creates adverse effects.
- ✓ Build greater capacity and options for a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students with disabilities.

¹⁹ Utilize cross-functional teams as appropriate to carry out recommendations discussed here and below.

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- Better integrate the location of District 75 classes in co-located schools so that they are in greater proximity to age-appropriate classes and could facilitate natural and planned interaction between disabled students and their nondisabled peers.
 - Determine whether the practice of isolating students with disabilities also takes place in self-contained classes in community schools.
 - Enable more co-located District 75 students to participate in general education classes in addition to those participating in full-inclusion models.
 - Build into the accountability system for building-level administrators some incentives and consequences for expanding or failing to expand access to the LRE.
- ✓ Enhance and expand transitional services from District 75 schools and programs to community schools.
- Develop and implement a process whereby inclusionary services for District 75 students in a community school can be transitioned to a community school principal, with District 75 continuing to provide technical assistance as needed. Under this model District 75 would set up programs; provide training and support for community-school staff; and provide ongoing technical assistance to facilitate continuation of high-quality services.
 - Expand the Children's School model that involves having a knowledgeable community-school principal work with District 75 students without additional District 75 principals. Also, facilitate the transfer of these students to community schools, along with continuing support from District 75 staff as appropriate.
 - Track and report on a regular basis the movement of students from District 75 to community schools.
 - Review the institutional barriers to least restrictive services in co-located buildings described in the findings section and prioritize strategies to remove these barriers, beginning with easier short-term actions and moving toward longer-term actions.
- ✓ Charge principals and administrators in co-located schools with planning strategically for the seamless delivery of services to students with disabilities.
- Hold accountable co-located District 75 and community-school principals for including in their school improvement plans strategies that would facilitate coordination and would support increased educational opportunities for District 75 students and community-school students with disabilities to be educated and to interact with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible and appropriate.
 - Require principals in co-located schools to facilitate inclusionary practices and support District 75 students who could be in one, two, or more general classes a week rather than

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the *all or nothing* approach to District 75 programming that some principals may be using.

- Charge principals with schools that are not co-located with District 75 with developing plans to provide students with challenging academic and behavioral needs with more access to less restrictive opportunities. Require these plans to align with systemwide standards of expected performance and provide a plan template to promote strategies to meet expected results.
- ✓ When opening new schools, particularly high schools, increase the numbers of students with disabilities, including District 75 students, served in least restrictive settings.
- ✓ Reduce the amount of time that students with challenging behavior remain in District 75 schools.
 - Set standards and procedures for students with challenging behavior who were initially referred appropriately to District 75 schools during the middle and high school years to receive intensive and targeted interventions and progress monitoring and to promote short-term rather than permanent placements.
 - Build mechanisms to support students transitioning back to community schools from District 75 schools and that would also assist staff in working with transitioning students.
- ✓ Collect, report, and disseminate LRE data using the State and Federal reporting frameworks. Show data on students with disabilities in various educational settings in the same manner reported to the state and the U.S. Department of Education. This would mean indicating the number and percent of students aged 6 through 21—
 - Removed from regular class for less than 21 percent of the day;
 - Removed from regular class between 21 percent and less than 60 percent of the day;
 - Removed from regular class for greater than 60 percent of the day; or
 - Served in public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound or hospital placements.

Provide these data for all students in the buildings and disaggregate according to District 75 and community schools.

- ✓ Create a Universal Related-Services Design.
 - Develop—with the input of stakeholders—a universal design for related services that is not based on separate supervisors for providers working with community and those working with District 75 students.

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- Continue to support professional development for special educators systemwide in order to serve more students with challenging needs in regular classrooms.
 - Consider a rating system, such as the one used by the Chicago Public Schools, for related-services providers working in more than one school. Chicago's rating system includes opinions of all relevant principals and clinical supervisors.
 - Review the current process for supporting equitable supervisory and service caseloads and revise as necessary in order to incorporate a new service delivery structure and ensure more equitable outcomes.
- ✓ Work with community school and District 75 PTAs and other similar organizations to ensure that all parents of disabled students in co-located schools are welcome to all meetings and activities, even when these meetings and activities involve the general education program.

B. Referral of Students to District 75

Local school staff members evaluate and develop individualized education programs (IEPS) for all Department of Education students. If the IEP team believes that a student requires District 75's specialized services, staff initiate a referral to the respective borough's Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations (OSEPO) for review. The OSEPO, as appropriate, forwards information to District 75 staff members for placement after considering such factors as a student's age, residence, need for an inclusive classroom, and accessible location. But it is not clear that placement criteria are applied consistently.

Positive Findings

- Staff members in District 75 appear to work hard to provide students the best possible services.
- The Office of Special Education Initiatives (OSEI) has developed supports and services to enable more students with Asperger's Syndrome to be successful and remain in community schools.
- District 75 helps community schools support students with challenging behavior through such activities as—
 - ✚ Training on therapeutic crisis intervention for staff members in suspension centers and other schools
 - ✚ Continued administration of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) grant at the Northeast Technical Assistance Center.
- District 75 developed the Strategies, Techniques and Options Prior to Placement (STOPP) program to provide hands-on assistance to schools requesting help in

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identifying and resolving situations in which a student's recent behavior might prompt a referral. The STOPP team provides help to schools in order to build capacity, resolve concerns, and develop strategies.

- One of District 75's newest initiatives is the *Step In* program, which offers intensive support and engagement for students returning to Department of Education schools from residential treatment and psychiatric facilities.

Areas of Concern

1. **Demographic Data.** As shown in Exhibit 10 below, more than half (51.4 percent) of all New York City's students with autism, emotional disabilities (ED), mental retardation (MR), and multiple disabilities (MD) attend District 75 schools. A greater share (75.9 percent) of autistic students citywide is educated in District 75 than any of the four groups. But, ED students constitute the largest proportion (38.1 percent) of District 75 students.

Exhibit 10. Percentage of New York City Public Schools with Autism, ED, MR , and Multiple Disabilities Attending District 75 Schools²⁰

| Disability Areas | Total | Community Schools | Non Public | District 75 | | |
|------------------|--------|-------------------|------------|-------------|---------|-------|
| | | | | No. | % Total | % D75 |
| Autism | 6,340 | 447 | 1,079 | 4,814 | 75.9% | 27.6% |
| ED | 17,372 | 8,554 | 2,183 | 6,635 | 38.2% | 38.1% |
| MR | 6,440 | 2,409 | 438 | 3,593 | 55.8% | 20.6% |
| MD | 3,647 | 604 | 728 | 2,315 | 63.5% | 13.3% |
| All | 33,856 | 12,014 | 4,428 | 17,414 | 51.4% | 100% |

The placement of students in District 75 and in community schools does not show unusual patterns by race or ethnicity. There are exceptions, however. Native American students with ED, of which there are few, are 3.8 times more likely than are white students with ED to be placed in a District 75 school. African American students with ED also are almost three times (2.75) more likely than are white students with ED to be placed in a District 75 school. Also, African American students are 2.5 times more likely to be identified as mentally retarded and educated through District 75 than are white students. These data do not necessarily reflect inappropriate placements, but they do suggest the need for follow-up analysis, monitoring, and review. (See Appendix A, Table 6.)

²⁰ *Number of Students by School, Site and Programs of 1/2/2008* created on January 9, 2008, by Office of Data Management. The report does not include data for three hospital program schools referenced in the District 75 School Directory.

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Boroughs also vary somewhat in the types of students placed in District 75. Staten Island has the highest proportion (52 percent) of District 75 students who are labeled ED, for instance, while the Bronx has the lowest (40 percent). Staten Island has the lowest proportion (53 percent) of MR students educated in District 75, while Queens has the highest (63 percent). (See Appendix A, Table 7.)²¹

Finally, small variations between boroughs exist in the placements of autistic children in District 75, with Staten Island having the lowest placement rate (87 percent) and the Bronx having the highest (95.7 percent). (See Appendix A, Table 8.)

2. ***Inconsistent Information about Appropriateness of District 75 Services.*** As indicated earlier, the Department of Education's Web site and other materials provide conflicting information about the type of students served by and eligible for District 75 services. District 75 describes its students as having moderate to significant challenges and the *Continuum of Services* document describes eligible students as having *significant* disabilities and/or *limited* cognitive abilities combined with *physical limitations*. This inconsistency, as well as inconsistencies in how District 75 curriculum and assessments are described, affects the ability of IEP teams to make appropriate decisions about whether a student is eligible or best suited for either a community- or District 75-school placement.
3. ***Community-School Services and Support.*** A consistent theme voiced by those interviewed by the team was that too few community schools provided supports to students with disabilities who exhibit challenging behavior. Further, people interviewed indicated that there were no real expectations that the community schools should or could provide such services.
 - ***Policy.*** The Department of Education appears to lack a policy requiring the representation or placement of District 75 students in new schools. The team was repeatedly told that District 75 students did not have broad access to these schools or that programs accommodating District 75 students had not been established in those schools.
 - ***Sporadic Performance.*** Some community schools have accessed and implemented targeted, scientifically based academic and behavioral interventions and progress monitoring systems (e.g., Response to Intervention), but no requirement or expectation appears to exist that all community schools should do this. District 75's STOPP program is a positive proactive step, as mentioned earlier, but there is no expectation by the Department of Education that schools will provide these services when needed or that they be held accountable for doing so.
 - ***Availability and Reliance on Specialized Classes.*** Although the *Continuum* describes the availability of 6:1:1 and 8:1:1 classes for community schools, the team heard that this configuration is not common outside of District 75. Also, 12:1:1 classes exist in both District 75 and community schools, but District 75 offers additional supports in these classes that typically are not available in community schools.

²¹ The appendix also provides racial/ethnic risk indices by borough.

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- **Principal Training.** Some people the team interviewed expressed the view that principals who receive training at the Principals Leadership Academy do not leave the program with adequate knowledge about inclusionary practices, intervention programs (including positive behavior intervention), progress monitoring, positive behavior supports, diverse learning strategies, cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, or Response to Intervention (RTI). The team did not review the actual curriculum of the academy to determine whether this claim was warranted.
5. **Referral Trends.** The team received information related to trends among students referred to District 75 but who could be supported in community schools. Some interviewees indicated that they believed that some students were referred unnecessarily to District 75 as the date of state assessments approached. Several individuals told the team that referrals to District 75 were sometimes made so that schools would not have to be accountable for the referred students. The team did not receive hard data on the extent of this issue, however, but the charge suggests that the Department of Education should review data on the patterns.
- **Challenging Behavior.** Students with challenging behaviors were often referred to District 75 without functional behavior analyses, behavior intervention plans, and/or without attempting to provide different or intensive settings in the community schools, such as a Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) classes, self-contained classes, or crisis counseling. These referral issues reflect a general perception of many interviewed that students with challenging behaviors and those identified as having emotional disabilities are over-referred for District 75 services. The data on the placement of emotionally disabled youth bear out these concerns.
 - ✚ Widespread belief exists that community schools have no desire or incentive to address behavioral issues proactively or to provide interventions to diminish disruptiveness. Many of those interviewed expressed the view that students who could otherwise be supported in a community-school setting are referred to District 75 prematurely and inappropriately.
 - ✚ People interviewed also were concerned that students who might be able to transition back into community schools from District 75 might fail because sufficient supports are not provided in the community schools.
 - ✚ The above perceptions were echoed by parents who told team members that there were insufficient supports for their children in community schools.
 - **Overage Eighth-Graders.** The team was informed by District 75 officials that eighth-grade students who have been retained multiple times and high school students with few course credits are sometimes given alternate assessments in order to trigger a District 75 referral. The team also heard that these students are often referred to District 75 because there are too few community schools with career and technical education programs (CTE) that would accept students with significant disabilities. Many individuals interviewed by the team thought these CTE programs had requirements too rigorous for

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students who were three-to-five years below grade level and that instruction in these programs was not sufficiently differentiated.

- ***District 75 Community-Based Vocational Instruction.*** Students taking standardized state assessments are sometimes referred to District 75 for vocational training, but District 75 administrators indicated that their programs were not designed to meet the needs of these students. District 75's Web site describes its community-based vocational instructional (CBVI) programs as preparing students for competitive employment through a number of intensive tech-prep education programs. Examples included—

- ✚ Paraprofessional Training Program: Prepares students graduating with IEP diplomas for employment as paraprofessionals

- ✚ Culinary Arts Program: Prepares students to work in all aspects of the restaurant industry

- ✚ Building Trades Program: Prepares students to work in a variety of building construction and renovation jobs, and

- ✚ Automobile Repair Program: Prepares students to work in automotive detailing, diagnosis, and repair facilities.²²

The Web site does not indicate that these programs are inappropriate for students taking standardized state assessments. Further, the programs appear to be relevant for students who do not require a separate-school education. District 75 officials believe that parents, some administrators, and others perceive these programs to be preferable for students who would benefit from them, especially if those students do not have reasonable access to these programs in the community schools. Some Department of Education officials believe there is sufficient access to CTE generally.

6. ***Accountability for Referrals.*** No effective process appears to be in place for investigating and resolving inappropriate referrals before they arrive at District 75.

- Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations (OSEPO) administrators explained that staff members reviewed District 75 referrals for appropriateness and have returned some referrals to IEP teams.
- District 75 staff members asserted to the team that they handle inappropriate referrals from community-school staff, but that the District 75 staff sometimes hesitates to return some students because of concerns about the capacity of the community schools to provide the follow-up that students need.

7. ***Other.*** Parents with students in District 75 programs reported that they and their children often had to travel considerable distances to schools outside their neighborhoods to receive services.

²² <http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/transition/cbvi.htm>

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Recommendations for Referral of Students to District 75

The following recommendations are offered to build the capacity of community schools to serve students with disabilities, to improve the achievement and behavior of students with disabilities, and to ensure that IEP teams refer only those students to District 75 who require its services.

- ✓ Establish and implement clear criteria for the referral and placement of students with disabilities for District 75 services.
 - Analyze data by school and borough showing the characteristics of students educated in community and District 75 schools, including disability, race/ethnicity, participation and performance in standardized or alternate assessments, and other relevant electronic information.
 - Use the above analysis to identify and investigate practices of community schools that educate students successfully with characteristics typical of students served in District 75 and those who are not. Conversely, look for evidence of overidentification and over-referral of students to District 75.
- ✓ Develop clear procedures and standards of practice for community schools on how these schools intervene with and monitor the academic and behavior needs of significantly challenged students.
 - Establish expected interventions that students with disabilities in community schools should be expected to receive prior to being referred to District 75.
 - Ensure that students with disabilities who have challenging behavioral issues receive Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans prior to referral to District 75.
 - Refer families whose child with disabilities is having a serious behavioral problem to a community-based organization for support prior to referral to District 75.
 - Deploy trained and effective paraprofessionals and others in the community school to assist with any necessary crisis management and data collection prior to referral to District 75.
 - Attempt to provide smaller specialized classes and alternative instructional and behavior management strategies to students with disabilities prior to referral to District 75.
- ✓ Enhance professional development for community-school teachers and staff to work with students with disabilities in order to build capacity to provide services without having to send students to District 75. This training might be done through the SSOs.

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- Use the school improvement planning process to design strategies to enhance professional development or improve program services.
 - Use the Leadership Academy to provide stronger professional development on working more effectively with students with disabilities.
 - Provide ongoing training for teachers and staff in community schools on crisis intervention, classroom management, and social and emotional learning to enhance skills in working with students with disabilities.
- ✓ Develop procedures for reviewing referrals to District 75, curtail inappropriate referrals, and provide supports for students at their assigned community school. The procedures should—
- Reduce the initiation of referrals and placements of students with disabilities to District 75.
 - Look into claims by some staff that there are inappropriate referrals to District 75; reduce the number of such referrals if verified; and lower the number of referrals of students with mild or less significant disabilities, including those with emotional disabilities.
 - Provide mechanisms for analyzing reasons for referrals and the actions needed to support students appropriately in the referring schools
 - Facilitate the provision of interventions and supports for referred students in order to be successful in the referring community schools.
 - Determine the extent to which District 75 can support needed programs such as STOPP or can provide needed professional development and technical assistance.
- ✓ Expand access to education-to-career opportunities for students with disabilities in community schools.
- Review current career and technical education programs available in community schools and determine how differentiated instruction would enable students with disabilities to access these programs and be successful.
 - Review the type of programs offered in District 75 and determine whether they or similar programs may be beneficial for students who do not otherwise require the restrictiveness of a separate school. As appropriate, expand options for career preparation in community schools.
 - Communicate to stakeholders any changes or adjustments to eligibility or preparation for career education programs that might affect the ability of students with disabilities to participate.

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- ✓ Utilize geocoding techniques to identify students who have to travel considerable distances to receive District 75 services and consider placing these students with common groups in programs closer to home. (This might require the creation of programs where they do not currently exist.) When space in nearby schools is needed to accommodate these students, consider how well the school system's current space utilization policy and practice handles this circumstance or requires modification.

C. Teaching and Learning in District 75

Positive Findings

- District 75's Web site has a voluminous amount of information and resources. For example, the site presents units of study for elementary, middle, and high school levels, with yearlong curriculum maps. According to District 75 officials, the English Language Arts Department of the Department of Education shares District 75 units of study with community-school staff. The site also presents best practices in inclusion and development of high-quality IEPs. It also presents a variety of differentiated reading material that teachers can use for students. As of February 8, 2008, the site had 58,306 different visitors and 132,082 total visits.
- At all of the school sites visited, the team members observed some of the most generous staffing patterns they have seen in any city—about one staff member for every 1.7 students (22,000 students by 13,261 staff members). Many classrooms had several adults in them, and many of the most significantly disabled students had one-on-one assistance. Staff members at the schools were actively engaged with students. (See Exhibit 11.)

Exhibit 11. District 75 Staff Members as of February 2008

| Title | Number of Staff Members |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Superintendent | 1 |
| Deputy Superintendent | 1 |
| Administrative Assistant Superintendent | 1 |
| District Cohort Leaders | 5 |
| Principals | 58 |
| Assistant Principals | 182 |
| Educational Administrators | 21 |
| Supervisor of Psychologists | 1 |
| Director of Visually Impaired | 1 |
| Supervisors of Visually Impaired | 3 |

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| | |
|---|-------|
| Supervisors of Hearing Education | 6 |
| Supervisors of Speech Improvement | 7 |
| Supervising Therapists | 2 |
| Teachers—Classroom Cluster | 3,677 |
| Teachers—Home Instruction | 271 |
| Teachers Hospital Schools | 85 |
| Teachers of the Deaf and Hearing | 186 |
| Teachers of the Blind/Limited Vision | 91 |
| Teachers of Speech Improvement | 435 |
| Audiologists | 22 |
| Children First Coaches | 34 |
| District Coaches/Teacher Trainers | 12 |
| Lead Instructional Mentors | 3 |
| English as a Second Language | 61 |
| Attendance Teachers | 32 |
| Guidance Counselors | 162 |
| School Social Workers | 99 |
| School Psychologists | 73 |
| School Psychiatrist | 1 |
| Substance Abuse Specialists | 2 |
| Sign Language Interpreters | 24 |
| Classroom Paraprofessionals | 3,658 |
| IEP Paraprofessionals | 2,971 |
| Teacher Aides | 35 |
| Family Workers | 62 |
| School Aides | 337 |
| Supervising School Aides | 45 |
| School Secretaries | 155 |
| Parent Coordinators | 58 |

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| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Physical Therapists | 210 |
| Occupational Therapists | 171 |
| Total | 13,261 |

- Many of the schools visited by the team had adequate technology in their classrooms; iMacs were being used very creatively in some classes to assist instruction.
- Transition centers in each borough have increased postschool employability for hundreds of students and District 75's travel-training program serves all Department of Education students with developmental disabilities who need this assistance as a prerequisite for job training.
- District 75-initiated professional development in Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) has sparked significant interest in this research-based process. As a result, schools are beginning to implement the three-tiered process to enhance positive student behavior. District 75 staff members have been recognized for their PBIS-related activities with an invitation to a national PBIS conference and requests by several museums in the city to train their education staff on dealing with students with challenging behaviors. A state grant used to support the program was to end this year, but will be rolled over for the next seven years.
- The Department of Education is working to expand the number of team-teaching classes, and offers a series of Special Education Training and Resource Centers (SETRC) to provide professional development to teachers on a series of special education-related topics.
- District 75 has been recognized for its professional development in the following areas for teachers of students with autism: Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), verbal behavior, TEACCH, Miller method, PECS, and Floor Time.
- District 75 has a 125-page professional-development catalogue for 2007-08 and online registration.²³ The catalogue lists more than 300 courses in academic interventions, arts, assessment, assistive technology, autism, English language learners, inclusion, instructional technology, literacy, mathematics, multiple disabilities, positive behavior supports, related services, science, speech, and transitions. District 75 also partners with colleges and universities throughout the country to enhance staff knowledge and expertise.
- The Department of Education is also working to boost capacity in community schools to serve students with disabilities by piloting the use of Special Education Lead Teachers in middle and high schools to improve instruction for these students.
- With a grant from Pace University, four young men with Asperger's Syndrome attend P226M in Manhattan and attend classes at Pace, meet with advisors, and have campus jobs. Their lives were documented in the movie—*Look! I'm in College!*—that will be screened in May at the Sprout Film Festival. Two of the students have graduated and are now meaningfully employed. District 75 plans to expand the program to eight students next year.

²³ District 75 Professional Development Course Offerings for 2007-2008. (WWW.District75PD.org)

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Areas of Concern

1. ***Curriculum and Instruction.*** In general, the team found that many District 75 staff members interviewed did not have a clear understanding of what the curriculum required or what programs were recommended for District 75 students.

- ***Expectations of Student Achievement.*** Members of the team repeatedly heard from individuals inside and outside of District 75 that achievement expectations were frequently low for District 75 students.
- ***Curricular Alignment and Implementation.*** The team could not find evidence that District 75 had conducted an explicit and independent alignment analysis to identify gaps between state standards and the curricula and materials that were used to teach district students.
 - ✦ District 75 has an extensive array of units of study on its Web site and it provides training to staff members through its professional development catalogue, but District 75 staff members consistently described the curriculum, its requirements, and coherence in vastly different ways—suggesting that the curriculum may not be implemented with much consistency at the school level.
 - ✦ Staff members interviewed by the team consistently reported that many District 75 teachers lacked subject-matter expertise. Moreover, staff viewed this problem to be especially troublesome for students taking standardized assessments, particularly students in middle and high schools.
 - ✦ The team did not witness much differentiated instruction in the schools and classrooms that it visited despite the large numbers of teachers and aides in the classrooms.
- ***High School Credits and Diplomas.*** District 75 schools cannot issue diplomas or offer course credit for students participating in state standardized assessments unless the schools partner with secondary-level community schools. Although such partnerships appear to facilitate joint activities, they also provide another example of the ramifications of operating separately managed services for students with disabilities. The team saw no evidence that a mechanism was in place by which District 75 teachers and community-school teachers could collaborate closely on core content knowledge to supplement the skills of District 75 teachers.
 - ✦ District 75 staff members interviewed by the team placed considerably greater emphasis on the importance of the functional curriculum than on the modified academic curriculum for students taking an alternate assessment.
 - ✦ Many staff members—both inside and outside of District 75—did not perceive that a universally applied set of expectations and academic standards was in place for District 75 students.

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- **Curriculum Documents.** The curriculum documents used by District 75 were not always clear about the nature of what was to be taught and at what level of depth or rigor. This situation may contribute to confusion about what teachers are to teach and how students will be assessed. It was also not clear that a procedure was in place to determine the extent that the materials were implemented. (See Section B, Referral of Students to District 75.)
- **Program Scheduling.** During the interviews, the team also learned that there have been occasions when instructional programming for District 75 students who were to be included in full-time general education classes was not done until well after the school year started, sometimes as late as November.
- **Program Consistency.** Considerable latitude exists at the school level in the choice of instructional programs in District 75 schools, which is also true in the community schools. District 75 has excellent lesson plans and materials for educating students with autism, but the district appears to lack written standards that would guide instruction using research-based interventions and progress monitoring. Such standards would help raise expectations for students with emotional and other disabilities.
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making.** The team found numerous examples of how District 75 staff members and teachers used data to target resources and guide interventions for students, but the use of data was not consistent across schools.
- **Assistive Technology.** Some schools visited by the team had older technology in the classrooms, but had more modern equipment in the computer labs. The team also saw examples of good student-specific assistive technology and communicative devices in the classes, although not all the evidence was consistent.
- **Professional Development.** District 75 has a professional development catalogue with an extensive number of offerings, but the team saw no evidence that the offerings aligned with state standards or with the priorities and goals of either District 75 or the Department of Education. In addition, the team could find no evidence that there was a regular system or schedule by which these professional development offerings were evaluated for their effects on student achievement or functioning.
- **Participation in Alternative Assessments.** Data show that approximately 61 percent of District 75 students take or will take the New York State Alternative Assessments, but the percentage varies by grade span. For example, the proportion of District 75 high school students taking the alternative assessment was 73 percent, whereas the proportion of students in grades 3 to 5 was never higher than 50 percent. (See Appendix A, Table 9.)

Data on District 75 student participation in alternative assessments over the last five years (FY 2003 to FY 2007) show that — (See Appendix A, Table 10.)

🚩 2,360 more students were identified for alternate assessments

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- ✦ 272 fewer students were identified for standardized assessments
- ✦ Alternative assessments increased for all grade clusters; the largest increase occurred for early childhood (+46 percent) and the smallest for high schoolers (+18 percent)
- ✦ Standardized assessments decreased for all grade spans *except* for high school, which increased by 12 percent; early childhood decreased the most (-15 percent)
- **Variations in Alternate Assessments.** The data also showed considerable variation in the percentages of District 75 students taking an alternative assessment by borough.
 - ✦ Manhattan had the highest proportion (approximately 59 percent) of high schoolers taking an alternate assessment; Staten Island had the lowest (approximately 34 percent). The proportions in the other boroughs ranged from 53.6 percent (Brooklyn) to 44.4 percent (Queens). Manhattan's proportion increased the most over the last five years—from 11.7 percent in grades 6-8 and 59.1 percent in high school, whereas Staten Island's proportion remained relatively steady at 20.8 percent in grades K-2, but increasing gradually to 33.6 percent in high school.
 - ✦ In the earliest grades, however, Manhattan had the smallest proportion of students taking an alternate assessment. The proportions of K-2 students taking an alternative assessment were approximately 16 percent in Manhattan, approximately 20 percent in Brooklyn and Queens, and approximately 21 percent in Staten Island. (See Appendix A, Table 11.)

Several reasons have been advanced for some of the increases in the proportions of students taking alternative assessments, particularly at the secondary school level—

- ✦ Some nonpublic elementary schools may not feed into an obvious or nearby nonpublic high school, and therefore may be “aging out” some students who end up being referred to District 75.
- ✦ Students with Asperger's Syndrome may be experiencing academic and social challenges as they move into middle and high schools and are referred to District 75.
- ✦ An increase in New York City's immigrant population may have brought students who are significantly disabled and never were educated in their native countries.
- ✦ Students in junior and senior high schools who may or may not have received special education services in community schools may be referred in greater numbers as challenging behavior increases.

However, these reasons do not fully explain the discrepancies in proportions among high schoolers in the different boroughs.

- **Diplomas Earned.** The team also received data showing higher percentages of District 75 students earning local, Regents, or Advanced Regents diplomas in FY 2007, compared

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with the prior year. A higher percentage of District 75 students also enrolled in the early admissions college program and received a high school equivalency diploma in FY 2007—even though the numbers are still small. And a smaller percentage of District 75 students earned IEP diplomas. (See Appendix A, Table 12.) The data were not sorted by graduates taking standard and alternate assessments, so it was impossible to determine the outcomes for these different groups of students.

- **Graduate Outcomes.** Data provided by District 75 show somewhat more positive outcomes for 2007 graduates than for 2006 graduates. Slightly more students were involved in competitive employment rather than in supported employment and the proportion of students in day rehabilitation declined slightly. Because these data were also not sorted by graduates taking standard and alternate assessments or by disability, the team was unable to analyze results further. (See Appendix A, Table 13.)

2. *Behavior and Discipline.*

- **PBIS Implementation.** District 75 schools appear to vary considerably with respect to their use and implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) programs. The team did not see any data analyzing the discipline rates of schools using PBIS and those not using it. However, the team visited one school that installed a positive behavioral support program because of its designation as a persistently dangerous school, and the principal reported substantially improved results. More such programs, regularly implemented, might have a positive effect at other sites.
- **Programs for Students with Emotional Disabilities.** Individuals interviewed by the team generally gave positive feedback about District 75's programs for students with autism or significant cognitive, sensory, or multiple disabilities. But the praise stopped when the discussion turned to students with emotional disabilities.
- **Suspensions and Attendance.** The number of District 75 suspensions decreased dramatically between FY 2006 and FY 2007. However, the team did not see suspension data broken down by school and the targeted interventions used in those schools. (See Appendix A, Table 14.) Team members, moreover, observed that attendance was very low in some schools visited.

3. *Staffing.* By any measure, the New York City Department of Education and District 75 have very generous staffing patterns in support of their students with disabilities.

- **Urban Comparisons.** It is extremely difficult to compare the varying kinds of staff members from one school system to another because of differences in counting methodology. Exhibit 6 and Appendix A, however, provide staffing data that were submitted in response to a survey by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative in the 2005-06 school year and data that were included in the September 2005 report *Comprehensive Management Review and Evaluation of Special Education*. However, it was impossible to compare the staffing ratios just for District 75 because no other city has a separate organizational structure like it. Exhibit 12 presents data on 28 responding school systems.

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The results, generally, showed that—

- ✚ New York City school system staffing ratios in all areas were more generous than were more than half of the responding school systems—including those in Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami-Dade County—and the U.S. average.
- ✚ These ratios were most generous for paraprofessionals, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, and physical therapists.

Exhibit 12. Comparison of Number of Staff to Number of Students with Disabilities

| Staff Area | Number of All Students with Disabilities per Staff Member | Number of All US SWDs per Staff Member | Of 28 School Systems, Number with Smaller Ratio | Range of Smaller Ratios | Range of Larger Ratios |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Special Educators | 13 | 16 | 9 | 7 to 12 | 14 to 30 |
| Paraprofessionals | 12 | 18 | 4 | 5.4 to 11 | 14 to 24 |
| Speech/Language Path. | 75 | 157 | 10 | 48 - 74 | 76 to 432 |
| Psychologists | 128 | 223 | 5 | 90 to 127 | 136 to 299 |
| Social Workers | 104 | 363 | 6 | 50 to 91 | 119 to 464 |
| Occupational Therapists | 131 | 472 | 1 | 120 | 159 to 1013 |
| Physical Therapists | 241 | 959 | 0 | 0 | 274 to 3560 |

- **Staffing Changes.** Between FY 2005 and FY 2008, the number of staff members in New York City and District 75 increased, with greater increases in District 75 in the areas of special educators (from 2,500 to 3,954) and paraprofessionals (from 5,935 to 7,001). (See Appendix A, Table 15.)
4. **Related Services.** In spite of the generous staffing ratios available for related services, there was a widespread belief in District 75 that access to these services was insufficient to meet student needs, particularly in the areas of speech/language, occupational therapy, and physical therapy services.
- **Criteria for Services.** The Department of Education does not appear to have clear or well-communicated entry and exit criteria for the provision of related services. It also does not appear to have uniform standards for progress monitoring, which could be contributing to the level of related services that students are deemed to need.
 - ✚ The Office of Special Education Initiatives (OSEI) is starting a process to develop criteria and progress monitoring for speech/language and counseling services.

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- ✚ It was reported to the team that service providers have little incentive to release students from related services when the outcome may cause staff reductions at desired school locations.
 - ✚ It was also reported to the team that some providers tended to favor students who are easier rather than those who are more difficult to serve. The team saw no hard data to back up this assertion, but the Department of Education might look into the charge.
 - ✚ New York City’s overall management of related services appears to contribute to inefficiencies in service delivery, as discussed earlier in this report.
- **Staff Shortages.**
 - ✚ **Related Service Authorizations (RSA).** The Department of Education has initiated a mechanism for addressing staff shortages using Related Service Authorizations (RSAs). These are used whenever neither the Department nor the contracted agencies can provide necessary services. In these cases, an RSA allows a family to secure an independent provider paid for by the Department of Education. Parents receive lists of approved independent providers and clinicians they may contact.
 - The fact that there is an institutionalized mechanism for parents to obtain related services on their own suggests shortages in this area.
 - Interviewees voiced their frustrations that the lists that were provided included service providers that were not always available to serve students or were located in neighborhoods that were far away or considered dangerous.
 - ✚ **Data.** In general, a larger percentage of District 75 students are awaiting services, compared with students in community schools. (See Exhibit 13.) The data suggest that more positions for occupational therapists and physical therapists may be needed, along with additional slots in the areas of speech/language and counseling.

Exhibit 13. Public School Related Services (As of 5/12/2008)

| Districts | | Counseling | Speech | Occupational Therapy | Physical Therapy |
|-----------|----------------|------------|--------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1-32 & 79 | Awaiting | 3,745 | 5,997 | 4,247 | 1,224 |
| | Receiving | 55,931 | 60,904 | 17,171 | 6,689 |
| | % of Receiving | 93.7% | 91.0% | 80.2% | 84.5% |
| 75 | Awaiting | 1,104 | 2,817 | 3,194 | 1,106 |
| | Receiving | 11,034 | 11,437 | 6,910 | 4,653 |
| | % of Receiving | 90.9% | 80.2% | 68.4% | 80.8% |

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- ✦ **Vacant Positions.** In spite of the need for services, the team received information from the Queens Integrated Service Center (ISC) showing that there were only five District 75 budgeted vacancies for occupational therapists and physical therapists.
 - **Assistants.** Interviewees told the team that the Department of Education does not use occupational therapy and physical therapy assistants, something that other school systems use in order to supplement and enhance the provision of these services. If New York State licensure requirements would permit employing such assistants, they would help supplement available resources and reduce reliance on the RSA process.
 - **Part-Time Staff.** The team heard conflicting information about whether the Department of Education hires part-time related-service providers and was unable to verify the actual practice. Part-time related-service providers, however, could easily help reduce any staff shortages.
5. **Funding.** The funding of District 75 is handled separately from other Department of Education programs, but financial support levels are generally high.
- Schools generally receive funding under the Fair Student Funding (FSF) formula based on how many periods each day a student requires special education classroom support, rather than according to a service delivery or staffing model. The formula includes weights for poverty and academic performance.
 - Funding for District 75 schools and programs is not handled through the FSF, but is allocated using a methodology determined by District 75 that resembles a more traditional staffing allocation formula, i.e., funds are distributed to each school based on a set of allocation rules position by position.
 - The FY 2008 budget for District 75 is expected to be approximately \$807.3 million or about \$36,698 per student (based on an enrollment of 22,000).²⁴
 - Funding for instructional services in District 75 covers administrative leadership at each school; teachers for 12:1:1, 8:1:1, and 6:1:1 classes; paraprofessionals; travel training etc. Funding for related services covers IEP-mandated paraprofessionals; guidance counselors; social workers, psychologists, speech, occupational, and physical therapists, audiologists, vision and hearing specialists, transportation aides, etc. Funding for support services covers coaches, attendance teachers, English as a Second Language teachers, family workers,) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations workers, etc. (See Exhibit 14.)
 - The District 75 budget is maintained separately from the budget of the larger Department of Education.

²⁴ Source: New York City Department of Education, FY 08 – D75 Budget Methodology and Management Matrix.

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Exhibit 14. Summary of District 75 Budget by Function, FY 2008

| Function | Amount |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Instructional Programs | \$454,382,987 |
| Related Services | 181,690,996 |
| Support Services | 14,434,843 |
| Home and Hospital | 39,721,106 |
| Pre-K Program Support | 2,679,673 |
| Pre-K Related Services | 2,496,852 |
| Administration | 4,114,527 |
| Placement | 854,683 |
| Categorical | 106,788,632 |
| Other | 182,000 |
| Total | \$807,346,299 |

Recommendations for Teaching and Learning in District 75

The following recommendations are offered to help the Department of Education improve the teaching and learning of students with disabilities in District 75.

- ✓ Ensure that the curriculum, programs, and materials used in District 75 and in co-located schools are aligned with state standards and assessments for students taking standardized and alternative assessments.
- ✓ Strengthen both the quality of instruction in core subjects and the provision of professional development by developing a series of indicators to assess the implementation and use of research-based interventions, differentiated instruction, and progress monitoring in District 75 and community schools.
 - Develop indicators to measure how well high-quality, research-based interventions for students with common sets of learning needs are being implemented, including such interventions as the—
 - ✚ Use of sign language, cued speech, etc., for students who are deaf
 - ✚ Use of Braille for students who are blind
 - ✚ Use of tiered positive behavior interventions and supports for students with challenging behavior
 - ✚ Use of specific programs for students with autism to improve language and oral communication skills, and social interaction
 - ✚ Use of assistive technology for students who have physical disabilities
 - ✚ Use of career-to-school programs for students with moderate to significant disabilities.

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- Establish indicators to assess how well District 75 and the community schools are providing differentiated instruction in core academic areas covered by standardized assessments, especially at the middle and high school levels, and use these indicators to assess the provision of professional development.
 - Strengthen the use of instructional data and progress monitoring to enhance the instruction of students with disabilities.
 - Discuss with the New York State Department of Education the feasibility of developing extended standards and curriculum/units of study for students using alternative assessments. (See North Carolina's Extended Content Standards: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/ncecs>.)
- ✓ Align professional development offerings with the instructional priorities and goals of District 75 and community schools with regard to students with disabilities that they serve.
- Prioritize professional development in District 75 around areas in which students show the greatest weaknesses.
 - To the extent possible, incorporate general and specialized instructional concepts into the professional development provided in both District 75 and community schools.
 - Develop a process (e.g., common planning time, professional learning communities) by which teachers and staff in co-located community and District 75 schools can share knowledge and skills from professional development sessions and collaborate on general education courses.
 - Expand the use of PBIS programs in both community schools and District 75 schools.
 - Ensure that mentors, coaches, and paraprofessionals receive the professional development and modeling needed to provide instruction and support to students with disabilities in both District 75 and community schools.
 - To the extent feasible, provide professional development for teachers and staff in co-located schools in plenty of time for them to practice and incorporate lessons before their schools are evaluated.
 - Monitor the implementation of the Quality Review process in District 75 and co-located schools. Use schools that do particularly well on these reviews as demonstration and professional development sites.
 - Monitor the implementation of the professional development and design an evaluation plan to assess its effectiveness on achievement and behavior of students with disabilities.
- ✓ Seek accreditation for District 75 schools so that they can award credits and diplomas for students taking standard assessments at separate facilities. (Investigate with the state

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requirements for accrediting these schools, analyze the gaps between these requirements and current practice, and take the necessary steps to meet the requirements.)

- ✓ Ensure appropriate staffing and service levels for students with disabilities.
 - Consider using occupational therapy and physical therapy assistants. If permissible under state rules, these assistants could be beneficial in meeting student needs.
 - Ensure that all related services have appropriate entry and exit criteria for providing services to students with disabilities, enforce these criteria, and update rules as necessary.
 - Monitor the extent to which IEP teams use the entry and exit criteria for related services.
 - Monitor the progress of students receiving speech/language, social work, counseling, and occupational and physical therapy services to determine if interventions are having the desired impact. Modify or drop an intervention as appropriate.
 - Consider budgeting more positions for occupational therapists and physical therapists, and speech/language and counseling, if possible.
 - Consider exploring with the state the possibility of establishing licensure for occupational therapy and physical therapy assistants.
 - Consider developing criteria for the provision of paraprofessional support for teachers based on student needs for specified activities and time periods or classes throughout the day to ensure that students receive support when needed. (See Chicago Public Schools' Position Analysis Review Manual at—
<http://www.oism.cps.k12.il.us/pdf/2007NEWPARFMANUAL.pdf>)
- ✓ Consider decentralizing District 75 budgeting to the borough level and consider developing a District 75 funding allocation system defined around student needs and disabilities, rather than around staffing.

D. Accountability

Positive Findings

- The Department of Education wants to strengthen accountability for District 75 and is working to identify accountability benchmarks that would make sense for the district. The Department is modifying its progress reports that grade schools on an A-to-F scale to include District 75. (Schools receive an overall grade or score that is calculated on the basis of assessments of school climate, student performance, student progress, and extra credit; and schools are then weighted according to their standing relative to their peer group and citywide averages.)

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- Community schools that house students receiving District 75 hearing and vision services in self-contained classes are accountable for their state assessment results on the community school progress report and on the state accountability reporting system.
- Discussions are being held on how to make the principal evaluation system relevant to District 75 principals.
- Each District 75 school completes an annual school report containing a variety of statistical data on students, teachers, and performance levels. The reports are used by the state to develop the school report cards.

Areas of Concern

The Department of Education, as noted earlier, has undergone substantial reforms over the last several years in an attempt to enhance leadership, empower school decision-making, and strengthen accountability for results. These reforms have not affected District 75 in any meaningful way, however, except for moving its business services to the Queens Integrated Service Center (ISC). To some individuals interviewed by the team, District 75 remains a traditional top-down management structure that is out of sync with the system's decentralized approach. This approach provides principals greater latitude over programming but more accountability for results. Critical to this approach is the ability of the Department of Education to include fair measures in its system of accountability to assess the performance of the most diverse students, including students with disabilities, and to spur and reward results without the unintended consequences that can lead to exclusionary practices.²⁵

1. Performance Standards. The team could not find anything in the accountability system pertaining to incentives or sanctions for the achievement of students with disabilities. This omission extended to the lack of extra credit in the accountability system for the use of—

- Differentiated instruction
- Collaborative team teaching and other inclusive models of instruction
- Positive behavior interventions and supports
- Response to Intervention (RTI) practices with research-based interventions for students falling behind their peers, progress monitoring, and data-driven decision-making.

2. Quality School Reviews. This accountability process does not currently include interactions between co-located community and District 75 schools, something that is necessary to ensure general education instruction to District 75 students on an equal par with their nondisabled peers.²⁶ Apparently, the Quality Review process in co-located community schools does not

²⁵ Note that the discussion of accountability in this section is also relevant to community-school accountability and community schools' students with disabilities and English language learners.

²⁶ Quality review reports assess schools generally on how well school leaders and teachers gather and use data to assess and monitor student progress; use data to determine next steps for students and set suitable goals for

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include an assessment of inclusionary practices involving District 75 students, because these students are not on the community-school registry. This limited view of the Quality Review process and the management of individual schools is counterproductive.

3. *Progress Reports*

- The 2006-2007 Progress Report provides schools additional credit when their high-need students make exemplary gains. Community schools can be recognized for the exemplary performance of students with disabilities (as well as other high-need students), but the process does not recognize the differences among students with disabilities ranging from relatively small-impact speech-language impairment to challenging sensory, emotional, or cognitive impairments. A school can gain only three extra credit points on its overall score for exemplary gains among high-need students, such as those with disabilities.
- The Progress Report does not appear to take into consideration the extent to which students—
 - ✦ Are referred to other schools just prior to state assessments
 - ✦ Are enrolled by community schools following a District 75 placement
 - ✦ Are included and supported in the general education program
 - ✦ Are given access to general education programs and activities, if they are in District 75.

4. ***Principal Performance Review.*** A widely held perception exists among those interviewed that community-school principals have an incentive to refer students to District 75 in order to avoid accountability on the performance reviews for low state-assessment scores.

- ✦ The performance reviews do not explicitly assess the extent to which community-school principals provide District 75 students with access to general education classes, programs, and activities. In other words, a principal could conceivably score well on his or her performance review without improving the achievement of students with disabilities or showing progress in including them in general education classes or programs, even though their inclusion is a component of the reviews.
- ✦ Some 32 percent of the principals' evaluation rubric is devoted to meeting progress report targets; 31 percent is devoted to meeting goals and objectives that principals set for themselves in consultation with the community or high school superintendent; 22 percent is devoted to attaining point values in the school's Quality Review; and 15 percent is devoted to other factors.

accelerating student learning; align academic work, strategic directions and resources, and engage students; conduct professional development and enhance staff capacity to accelerate learning; and evaluate student progress over the school year.

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- ✦ Some five percent of a principal's annual review involves compliance issues related to special education and English language learners. Special education-related issues include the timeliness of providing IEP-mandated services; the timeliness of special education evaluations and reevaluations; the provision of required annual and triennial reviews; and the extent to which special education students are served in their home school (or school of choice) and receive services in a general education setting. Most individuals interviewed by the team viewed this five-percent weight as too low to encourage positive action on behalf of special-needs students.
 - ✦ An additional 10 points in the principals' evaluation rubric are devoted to the extent that they are in compliance with various legal mandates and key Department of Education policies.
 - ✦ It does not appear that general education principals are accountable for the performance of District 75 students who are attending their schools or for the implementation of IEPs for District 75 student in their schools.
5. **Parent Survey.** The Department of Education developed a separate parent survey for District 75 rather than including parents of District 75 students in a broader systemwide survey. The team did not see the survey, so it is difficult to assess its applicability, but the separate nature of the survey underscores how separate District 75 is from the larger school system.
6. **Data.** Data are essential to an effective accountability system and for triggering interventions when necessary. The team found a number of data issues that undermined the ability of the school system to apply accountability measures or intervention systems to District 75 and to students with disabilities generally.
- **SEGIS.** The Department of Education has invested considerable fiscal and human resources in developing a placement system, the Special Education Student Information System (SEGIS), that reports and tracks students with disabilities. The team was advised, however, that many District 75 staff members continued to use the old filemaker pro system, which is not fully integrated with other data systems, and that staff members are not transferring over to the SEGIS system in a timely manner.
 - **Collocation Data.** Data from District 75 are reported by school, including all of its site locations, but are not reported by co-located site. The result is that one cannot use the database to closely target interventions or analyze the extent to which collocation within a community school may or not be beneficial.
 - **Due Process.** The Department of Education maintains information on due process cases and issues, but does not disaggregate them for District 75. The Department of Education is in the process of reviewing proposals to create and implement an electronic data system to provide these kinds of data.
 - **Reports.** Reports reviewed by the team tended to include only District 75 data, community schools data, or Department of Education public school data that includes but

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does not disaggregate District 75 data. This pattern suggests a lack of systematic reporting on issues that could affect both community and District 75 schools but in differing ways. The pattern provides further evidence of the separate identity and functioning of District 75.

Recommendations for Accountability

The following recommendations are offered to help the Department of Education strengthen overall accountability for the placement, support, and achievement of students with disabilities in District 75.

- ✓ Develop and communicate clearer performance goals in the following areas—
 - Collaborating between co-located community and District 75 schools.
 - Establishing standards for engaging, intervening, and monitoring the academic and behavior progress of students with challenging needs, including the use of RTI and PBIS.
 - Determining when specialized classes with small student-teacher ratios in community schools are required and how alternative strategies involving more inclusive educational strategies might be used.
 - Monitoring implementation of the curricular frameworks for students taking standardized and alternate assessments and ensure that they are receiving necessary interventions.
- ✓ Ensure that the Quality Review process is incorporated into the Quality Review process. Train Quality Reviewers on assessing performance related to these goals and their implications for co-located community and District 75 schools.
- ✓ Consider using value-added indicators in progress reports for schools that—
 - Refer students with disabilities to other schools only after utilizing appropriate interventions and other strategies.
 - Do not refer students to District 75 late in the year, immediately prior to state assessments.
 - Accept students returning from District 75 schools and ensure that they are provided necessary resources and supports.
 - Provide incentives to include students with disabilities in the general education environment at or above specified rates.
 - Attain more than one year's worth of academic gain for students with disabilities in a single year.

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- ✓ Amend the weighting given in the accountability system for students with disabilities from five percent. Conduct a detailed analysis of disability types and reweight community and District 75 school indices accordingly.
- ✓ Consider revising the principal performance review process to reward principals for how they—
 - Incorporate and integrate students with disabilities in co-located community and District 75 schools into general education classes.
 - Improve the achievement and performance levels of students with disabilities.
 - Use positive behavior supports for students with significant disruptive behavior or reduce high suspension or expulsion rates among students with disabilities.
 - Decrease referrals to District 75.
 - Modify their school improvement plans to incorporate joint planning between community school and District 75 staff.
 - Use and monitor use of the SESIS data system among staff.
- ✓ Analyze and regularly report joint and separate (community school and District 75) performance data on students with disabilities.
 - Analyze data for all students with disabilities and disaggregate these data by all relevant groups to facilitate comparative study and follow-up support on academic performance, graduation, drop out, attendance, suspension, expulsion, referral for special education services or District 75, timely (re)evaluations and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), implementation of standards, etc.
 - Disaggregate disability data according to organizational type (community school, District 75, Integrated Service Center (ISC), SSO, nonpublic, parentally placed) and disability type, age, grade, race/ethnicity, gender, suspensions, expulsions, graduation, drop out, etc.
 - Produce usable and analytical reports incorporating both District 75 and community-school data analyzing school performance, patterns and trends in performance that might trigger interventions, inform professional development, or determine incentives and consequences.
 - Disaggregate variables described above for community schools that co-locate with District 75 schools to identify trends, issues, and needs. Consider reporting District 75 student test scores both to community and District 75 schools for analytical purposes.
- ✓ Disaggregate the numbers and types of due process cases in District 75.

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- ✓ Consider developing parent surveys that would include core and differentiated questions for parents of students with disabilities, including those in District 75 schools, instead of doing separate surveys. Include in the survey a question about whether students with disabilities have access to general education programs and activities.

Chapter 3. Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of the recommendations prepared by the Strategic Support Team of the Council of the Great City Schools.

A. Organizational Structure and Operations

- ✓ Reform and integrate the currently bifurcated system of services for students with disabilities into a universal and seamless design.
- ✓ Build the reforms of special education around high standards, data-driven instruction, the integration of services and collaboration of staff, strong accountability, and school empowerment.
- ✓ Retain District 75 but clearly define its core mission and role as part of a universal and integrated design for the provision of instruction and services to students with disabilities citywide.
- ✓ Redesign the provision of special education services citywide to reflect systemic and universal services and supports for students with disabilities.
- ✓ Reorganize District 75 so it is more congruent with the structure of the Department of Education.
- ✓ Decentralize functions of the District 75 Integrated Service Center and the Office of Student Enrollment, Planning and Operations (OSEPO).
- ✓ Standardize and integrate Web site information for all special education services and supports.
- ✓ Set clearer expectations and rules for the interactive and collaborative management of co-located schools.
- ✓ Review the Building-Council process in order to ensure timely and satisfactory resolution of disputes over services to students with disabilities.
- ✓ Build greater capacity and options for a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students with disabilities.
- ✓ Enhance and expand transitional services from District 75 schools and programs to community schools.
- ✓ Charge principals and administrators in co-located schools with planning strategically and jointly for the seamless delivery of services to all students with disabilities.

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- ✓ When opening up new schools, particularly high schools, increase the numbers of students with significant disabilities served, including District 75 students, in least restrictive settings.
- ✓ Reduce the amount of time that students with challenging behavior remain in District 75 schools.
- ✓ Collect, report, and disseminate LRE data using the State and Federal reporting frameworks.
- ✓ Create a universal related services design.
- ✓ Work with community school and District 75 PTAs and other similar organizations to ensure that all parents of disabled students in co-located schools are welcome to all meetings and activities even when they involve the general education program.

B. Referral of Students to District 75

- ✓ Establish and implement clear criteria for referring students with disabilities to receive District 75 services.
- ✓ Develop clear procedures and standards of practice for community schools on how they intervene with and monitor the academic and behavior needs of significantly challenged students.
- ✓ Enhance professional development for community-school teachers and staff to work with students with disabilities to build capacity for providing services without having to send students to District 75. This effort might be pursued through the School Support Organizations (SSOs).
- ✓ Develop procedures for reviewing referrals to District 75, curtail inappropriate referrals if verified, and provide supports for students at home schools.
- ✓ Expand access to education-to-career opportunities for students with disabilities in community schools.
- ✓ Utilize geocoding techniques to identify students who have to travel considerable distances to receive District 75 services and consider placing these students with common groups in programs closer to home. (This might require the creation of programs where they do not currently exist.)

C. Teaching and Learning in District 75

- ✓ Ensure that the curriculum, programs, and materials used in District 75 and in co-located schools are aligned with state standards and assessments for students taking standardized and alternative assessments.
- ✓ Strengthen both the quality of instruction in core subjects and the provision of professional development by developing a series of indicators to assess implementation.

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- ✓ Align professional development offerings with the instructional priorities and goals of District 75 and community schools serving students with disabilities.
- ✓ Seek accreditation for District 75 schools so that they can award credits and diplomas for students taking standard assessments at separate facilities. (Investigate the state requirements for accrediting these schools, analyze the gaps between these requirements and current practice, and take the necessary steps to meet the requirements.)
- ✓ Ensure appropriate staffing and service levels for students with disabilities.
- ✓ Consider decentralizing District 75 budgeting to the borough level and consider developing a District 75 funding allocation system defined around student needs and disabilities, rather than around staffing.

D. Accountability

- ✓ Develop and communicate clearer performance goals for students with disabilities in co-located and District 75 schools.
- ✓ Ensure that the assessment of co-located programs is incorporated into the Quality Review process. Train Quality Reviewers on how to include and assess programs in co-located locations.
- ✓ Consider using value-added indicators in progress reports.
- ✓ Amend the weighting given in the accountability system for students with disabilities from five percent. Conduct a detailed analysis of disability types and reweight community and District 75 school indices accordingly.
- ✓ Consider revising the principal performance review process to reward principals for how they incorporate and integrate students with disabilities in co-located community and District 75 schools.
- ✓ Analyze and regularly report joint (community school and District 75) performance data on students with disabilities.
- ✓ Consider developing parent surveys that would include core and differentiated questions for parents of students with disabilities, including those in District 75 schools, instead of doing separate surveys. Include in the survey a question about whether students with disabilities have access to general education programs and activities.
- ✓ Disaggregate the numbers and types of due process cases in District 75.

Chapter 4. Synopsis and Discussion

District 75 is one of the most unique organizations in urban public education. It was designed some 30 years ago to serve the most significantly disabled students in the nation's largest school system. No other major city school system in the nation—no matter how many similar students it serves—has a school district within a school system established for quite the same purpose.

District 75, however, has both positive features and negative consequences existing side by side. The district enjoys the passionate support of many parents whose children it serves. Its staff is dedicated and focused on a set of children that are often and historically ignored by educators and others elsewhere in the country. It has considerable expertise. And it is well-endowed with funds and staff to allow it to provide services and supports that other school systems cannot.

At the same time, District 75 is something of a life raft, floating unmoored and isolated in a sea of expertise and reform that it little notices. And it assumes that life in the raft is better than being on the mother ship.

Unfortunately, this situation has ramifications not only for those steering the ship, but also for those aboard it. Students attending District 75 schools or co-located programs are often cut off from their nondisabled peers and segregated from programs and services that could be beneficial. This segregation exists from the top of the Department of Education all the way down to the classroom. Special education leadership operates in silos that barely acknowledge each other. Professional development of teachers and staff is separate. Reporting requirements are different and largely incompatible. Data systems do not communicate with each other. Budgets are maintained separately. Principals divide their responsibilities depending on whether the students are part of District 75 or a community school. Parents do not attend each other's meetings. Students are often kept apart in separate wings or floors of the same buildings. Some children have full access to services, programs, and facilities; some do not. And to further complicate matters, it is not always clear how a student ends up in one circumstance rather than another.

The Chancellor and his team at the Department of Education have asked an important set of questions about this seemingly anachronistic structure that is District 75. Should this district be separate? How does District 75 fit into the broader efforts to reform the entire city school system? Would children be better served if the Department of Education had a single, more seamless system for providing services to students with disabilities?

The Council of the Great City Schools was asked to take a fresh look at these questions. We have grappled with them, however, in much the same ways that others have. The team assembled for this project has concluded that leaving District 75 alone is not acceptable. District 75's expectations for the students that it serves need to be elevated. Its programs and supports need to be improved. And it needs to be brought into the larger reforms being pursued citywide.

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But the team has also concluded that dismantling District 75 would cause as many problems as it would solve. Taking it apart would likely create bureaucratic problems, at least in the short-term, that could easily undermine the services that District 75 students do enjoy. Many District 75 staff members and parents think—sometimes incorrectly—that the community schools cannot adequately serve students with the greatest challenges and that the community schools will never be able to do so. At the same time, the isolation of expertise in many District 75 programs has left the larger system of schools without many of the supports and some of the expertise to provide these students with what they need. Many teachers and administrators do not have the skills to serve students with significant disabilities and too many don't want to acquire these skills or serve them.

This long history of separation and the animosity that it has engendered on both sides has also created political ownership in District 75 that is partially unwarranted but deeply felt. Parents of significantly disabled children fear that elimination of District 75 would mean that their children would go without adequate services. They are not likely to be dissuaded from this very visceral position simply because someone asserts that taking this step will be a good thing in the long run.

The Council of the Great City Schools has taken a third path in its recommendations to the Department of Education. It is proposing to keep District 75. But the Council and its Strategic Support Team are also proposing to more fully integrate District 75's operations with those of the Department of Education and to do so in a way that is consistent with the Chancellor's priorities for better student achievement, accountability for results, and flexibility in local decision-making. We have proposed a more integrated reporting structure; cross-functional teams to work on shared operating issues; more aligned budgeting procedures; greater involvement of parents in community-school activities; stronger accountability of community-school leaders for the inclusion and performance of special education students; more collaborative related services; decentralized services and programs so parents don't have to travel so far; more consistently applied placement criteria; more integrated professional development; better reporting and more transparency; higher quality instructional programming; and greater access to new schools and career and technical education programs. At the same time, we have recommended boosting the capacity of the community schools to serve students with disabilities, including those with the most significant challenges.

These and many other recommendations contained in this report will not solve all problems for District 75, the children and parents it serves, or for the Department of Education. We believe, however, that the Department of Education's desire to more fully integrate District 75 into its reforms can be accomplished in part by these proposals to improve services across the board for students with disabilities and to join together programs, activities, and expertise on behalf of students with the greatest needs. We hope that the results will not have people looking for life rafts, but will instead encourage them to be rowing together in the same boat.

Appendices

Appendix A. Statistical Tables

Table 1. Comparison of Schools and Locations by Borough

| Areas of Comparison ²⁷ | Staten Island | Manhattan | Queens | Brooklyn | The Bronx | Total |
|--|---------------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|----------------------|
| Number Students | 5,899 | 2,680 | 5,023 | 1,460 | 4,611 | 19,673 ²⁸ |
| Number of Schools | 18 | 9 | 13 | 4 | 12 | 56 |
| Average Students/School | 328 | 297 | 386 | 365 | 384 | 351 |
| Total Physical Locations | 87 | 43 | 86 | 31 | 49 | 296 |
| Average Locations/School | 4.7 | 4.8 | 6.6 | 7.8 | 4.3 | 5.3 |
| No. Schools w/ Locations > 200 Students | 6 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 19 |
| Range | 228-463 | 233-368 | 257-338 | 225 | 231-555 | 225-555 |
| No. Schools with Locations < 25 Students | 14 | 8 | 12 | 4 | 8 | 46 |
| No. Locations < 25 Students | 33 | 17 | 29 | 16 | 13 | 108 |
| Range | 0-5 | 0-4 | 0-6 | 0-9 | 0-2 | 0-9 |

Table 2. Disability Incidence Rates by Borough

| Area of Comparison | Brooklyn | Manhattan | Queens | Staten Is | The Bronx | Total |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Total Students (K-HS) | 295,864 | 152,103 | 261,695 | 57,756 | 208,144 | 975,562 |
| No. of D75 Students | 5,899 | 2,680 | 5,023 | 1,460 | 4,611 | 19,673 |
| % of Total Student Population | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.0 |
| % of All D75 | 29.99 | 13.62 | 25.53 | 7.42 | 23.44 | 100% |

Table 3. Distribution of D75 Students by Grade Cluster and Borough

| Grades | Type of Data | Brooklyn | Manhattan | Queens | S I | The Bronx | All |
|---------|-----------------|----------|-----------|--------|------|-----------|------|
| K-2 | Number SWDs | 875 | 363 | 846 | 250 | 797 | 3131 |
| | % of All Grades | 14.8 | 13.5 | 16.8 | 17.1 | 17.3 | 15.9 |
| 3rd-5th | Number SWDs | 1238 | 478 | 1089 | 301 | 1009 | 4115 |
| | % of All Grades | 21.0 | 17.8 | 21.7 | 20.6 | 21.9 | 20.9 |
| 6th-8th | Number SWDs | 1241 | 421 | 1039 | 344 | 1092 | 4137 |
| | % of All Grades | 21.0 | 15.7 | 20.7 | 23.6 | 23.7 | 21.0 |
| HS | Number SWDs | 2502 | 1362 | 1917 | 492 | 1885 | 8158 |
| | % of All Grades | 42.2 | 50.8 | 38.2 | 33.7 | 40.9 | 41.5 |

²⁷ Number of Students by School, Site and Programs of 1/2/2008 created on January 9, 2008, by Office of Data Management. The report does not include data for three hospital program schools referenced in the District 75 School Directory. Unless otherwise noted, this source was used for the tables in Appendix A.

²⁸ The total does not include students in home instruction or hospital schools.

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Table 4. NYC, State, and US Incidence Rates by Disability ²⁹

| Disability Areas | NYC | NY State | US |
|--------------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| Learning Disability | 43.35 | 47.28 | 47.50 |
| Speech or Language | 30.65 | 17.73 | 18.70 |
| Emotional Disabilities | 5.93 | 10.69 | 8.00 |
| Other Health Impairments | 6.03 | 9.59 | 7.50 |
| Mental Retardation | 4.33 | 3.80 | 9.60 |
| Hearing Impairments | 1.16 | 1.36 | 1.20 |
| Orthopedic Impairments | 0.78 | 0.68 | 1.10 |
| Multiple Disabilities | 2.45 | 5.59 | 2.20 |
| Autism | 4.27 | 2.45 | 2.30 |
| Visual Impairment | 0.45 | 0.46 | 0.40 |
| Traumatic Brain Injury | 0.17 | 0.37 | 0.40 |

Table 5. Number and Percentage of Students by Disability Area and Service Type

| Disability Areas | Total SWD | Public - NonD75 | Non Public | D75 | District 75 | |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | % of Disability Area | % of All D75 Students |
| Learning Disability | 64,423 | 61,900 | 1,801 | 717 | 1.11 | 3.56 |
| Speech or Language | 45,545 | 41,490 | 3,684 | 370 | 0.81 | 1.84 |
| Emotional Disabilities | 17,410 | 8,554 | 2,183 | 6635 | 38.19 | 32.97 |
| Other Health Impairment | 8,972 | 7,571 | 925 | 471 | 5.25 | 2.34 |
| Mental Retardation | 6,496 | 2,409 | 438 | 3593 | 55.79 | 17.85 |
| Hearing Impairment | 1,733 | 1,539 | 78 | 110 | 6.37 | 0.55 |
| Orthopedic Impairment | 1,158 | 945 | 209 | 4 | 0.35 | 0.02 |
| Multiple Disabilities | 3,710 | 604 | 728 | 2315 | 63.48 | 11.50 |
| Autism | 6,416 | 447 | 1,079 | 4814 | 75.93 | 23.92 |
| Visual Impairment | 678 | 380 | 173 | 109 | 16.47 | 0.54 |
| Traumatic Brain Injury | 271 | 173 | 32 | 47 | 18.65 | 0.23 |
| Deafness | 583 | 138 | 396 | 42 | 7.29 | 0.21 |
| No CAP Data | 629 | | | 629 | | |
| Preschool | 269 | | | 269 | | |
| Total | 158,294 | 126,150 | 11,726 | 20,125 | | |
| % Total Enrollment | | 11.54 | 1.11 | 1.98 | | |
| % SWDs | | 79.84 | 7.42 | 12.74 | | |

²⁹ 27th National Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2005 (latest data available).

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Table 6. Comparison of D75 and Community Schools Risk Ratios for Students with Autism, ED, MR & MD by Race and Ethnicity

| Disability Areas | District 75 | | | Community Schools | | |
|------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | Black to White | Hispanic to White | Amer. Ind. to White | Black to White | Hispanic to White | Amer. Ind. to White |
| Autism | 0.83 | 0.67 | 1.67 | x | X | x |
| ED | 2.75 | 1.25 | 4.00 | 2.80 | 1.40 | 3.80 |
| MR | 2.50 | 2.00 | x | 1.50 | 1.50 | x |
| MD | 1.33 | 0.33 | 1.00 | 1.33 | 1.00 | x |
| Total | 1.56 | 0.88 | 1.9 | 1.89 | 1.22 | 2.67 |

Table 7. Comparison of Community School and District 75 for Students with ED and MR by Borough

| Boroughs | Emotional Disabilities | | | | Mental Retardation | | | |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | CS | District 75 | | Total | CS | District 75 | | Total |
| | | No. | % of All | | | No. | % of All | |
| Manhattan | 1258 | 922 | 42.29% | 2180 | 322 | 540 | 62.65% | 862 |
| The Bronx | 2320 | 1574 | 40.42% | 3894 | 637 | 973 | 60.43% | 1610 |
| Brooklyn | 2811 | 2153 | 43.37% | 4964 | 917 | 1217 | 57.03% | 2134 |
| Queens | 1626 | 1521 | 48.33% | 3147 | 437 | 744 | 63.00% | 1181 |
| Staten Is | 539 | 595 | 52.42% | 1135 | 96 | 110 | 53.40% | 206 |
| Total | 8554 | 6765 | 44.16% | 15319 | 2409 | 3584 | 59.80 | 5993 |

Table 8. Comparison of Community School and District 75 for Students with Autism by Borough

| Boroughs | Autism | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | Community schools | District 75 | | Total |
| | | No. | % of All | |
| Manhattan | 68 | 534 | 88.70% | 602 |
| The Bronx | 62 | 1362 | 95.65% | 1424 |
| Brooklyn | 151 | 1279 | 89.44% | 1430 |
| Queens | 108 | 1223 | 91.89% | 1331 |
| Staten Is | 58 | 390 | 87.05% | 448 |
| Total | 447 | 4788 | 91.46% | 5235 |

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Table 9. Comparison of D75 Students Taking a Standardized or Alternate Assessment

| Grades | Standardized Assessment | | | Alternate Assessment | | | AA & SA |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | No. | % AA | % Grade | No. | % SA | % Grade | |
| K-2nd ³⁰ | 972 | 12.8 | 31.0 | 2159 | 18.1 | 36.4 | 3131 |
| 3rd-5th | 2069 | 27.2 | 50.3 | 2046 | 17.1 | 49.7 | 4115 |
| 6th-8th | 2349 | 30.9 | 56.8 | 1788 | 15 | 43.2 | 4137 |
| HS | 2211 | 29.1 | 27.1 | 5947 | 49.8 | 72.9 | 8158 |
| Total | 7601 | 100.0 | 38.9 | 11940 | 100.0 | 61.08 | 19541 |

Table 10. District 75 Students by Type of Assessment (Change Over Time) ³¹

| Grade Cluster | Alternate Assessment | | | | Standardized Assessment | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | FY 03 | FY 07 | # Change | % Change | FY 03 | FY 07 | # Change | % Change |
| EC | 1429 | 2086 | + 657 | + 46% | 1085 | 920 | - 165 | - 15% |
| EL | 1594 | 1899 | + 305 | + 19% | 2511 | 2304 | - 207 | - 8% |
| JH | 1333 | 1847 | + 514 | + 39% | 2583 | 2493 | - 90 | - 3% |
| HS | 4897 | 5781 | + 884 | + 18% | 1643 | 1833 | + 190 | +12% |
| Total | 9253 | 11613 | + 2360 | + 26% | 7822 | 7550 | - 272 | - 3% |

Table 11. Comparison of Alternate Assessment Rates by Borough

| Grades | Alternate Assessment | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Brooklyn | | Manhattan | | Queens | | Staten Is | | Brooklyn | | Total | Percent |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | | |
| k-2nd ³² | 551 | 15.7 | 264 | 15.9 | 581 | 19.5 | 149 | 20.8 | 614 | 20.0 | 2159 | 18.1 |
| 3rd-5th | 584 | 16.7 | 221 | 13.3 | 587 | 19.7 | 166 | 23.2 | 488 | 15.9 | 2046 | 17.1 |
| 6th-8th | 497 | 14.1 | 194 | 11.7 | 491 | 16.7 | 160 | 22.4 | 446 | 14.6 | 1788 | 15.0 |
| HS | 1887 | 53.6 | 979 | 59.1 | 1325 | 44.4 | 240 | 33.6 | 1516 | 49.5 | 5947 | 49.8 |
| Total | 3519 | 100.0 | 1658 | 100.0 | 2984 | 100.0 | 715 | 100.0 | 3064 | 100.0 | 11940 | 100.0 |

³⁰ Students in grades K through 2 do not take state assessments but the type of assessment projected is included in D75 data.

³¹ Benchmark Age Enrollment (Standard vs. Alternate Assessment) Table 2c

³² *Id.*

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Table 12. Comparison of Diplomas Earned in FYs 2006 and 2007 ³³

| Type of Diploma | 2005-2006 | | 2006-2007 | |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| | Number | % of All | Number | % of All |
| Local Diploma | 85 | 9.9% | 115 | 11.7% |
| HS Regents Diploma | 41 | 4.8% | 63 | 6.4% |
| HS Advanced Regents Diploma | 7 | 0.8% | 10 | 1.0% |
| IEP Diploma | 721 | 83.8% | 777 | 79.1% |
| Early Admissions College Program | 4 | 0.5% | 7 | 0.7% |
| HS Equivalency Diploma | 2 | 0.2% | 10 | 1.0% |
| Totals | 860 | 100% | 982 | 100% |

Table 13. Comparison of Graduate Outcomes for FYs 2006 and 2007 ³⁴

| Outcomes | 2006 | % of All Graduates | 2007 | % of All Graduates | 2007 Improvement |
|----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|--------------------|------------------|
| Competitive Employment | 89 | 30% | 91 | 32% | 2% + |
| Supported Employment | 121 | | 158 | | |
| Vocational Training | 80 | 9% | 101 | 13% | 4% + |
| Day Rehabilitation | 196 | 30% | 200 | 27% | 3% - |
| College | 14 | 3% | 20 | 5% | 2% + |
| Continuing Adult Education | 3 | | 5 | | |
| Community Services | 13 | Not Available | 10 | Not Available | |

Table 14. Comparison of Suspension Data by Fiscal Year (2/5/08)

| FY 2006 | | | FY 2007 | | | FY 2008 | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Principal Suspension | Superintendent Suspension | Total | Principal Suspension | Superintendent Suspension | Total | Principal Suspension | Superintendent Suspension | Total |
| 610 | 4432 | 1042 | 372 | 307 | 679 | 144 | 123 | 267 |

³³ Data provided by D75.

³⁴ Data for Tables 12 and 13 provided by D75.

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Table 15. Comparison of Staff over Time ³⁵

| Area of Staff | 2004-2005 | | NY FY 2007 | D75 FY 2008 |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|-------------|
| | NYCDOE | D75 | | |
| Special Educators | 11,810 | 2,500 | N/A | 3,954 |
| Paraprofessionals | 12,516 | 5,935 | 12,649 | 7,001 |
| Speech/Language Pathologists | 2,015 | 434 | 942 ³⁶ | 435 |
| Psychologists | 1,170 | 55 | 1,253 | 73 |
| Social Workers | 1,440 | 104 | 1,488 | 99 |
| Occupational Therapists | 1,151 | 173 | 1,244 | 171 |
| Physical Therapists | 625 | 201 | 666 | 210 |
| Nurses | Not Available | 204 | 560 | NYCDOE |

³⁵ D75 provided D75 data; OSEI provided NYCDOE data from FY2008 child count.

³⁶ The data show a large variance among speech/language providers in the two fiscal years. Further investigation would determine the accuracy of the FY 2005 data.

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Table 16. Comparison of D75/Community-School Students by Race/Ethnicity and by Borough and Citywide

| Boroughs | Disabilities | Black | | | | Hispanic | | | | White | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | District 75 | | Comty Scls | | District 75 | | Comty Scls | | District 75 | | Comty Scls | |
| | | No. | % Enr | No. | % Enr | No. | % Enr | No. | % Enr | No. | % Enr | No. | % Enr |
| Manhattan | Autism | 191 | 0.5 | 15 | 0.0 | 248 | 0.3 | 25 | 0.0 | 60 | 0.3 | 23 | 0.1 |
| | ED | 455 | 1.1 | 593 | 1.4 | 407 | 0.5 | 582 | 0.7 | 40 | 0.2 | 62 | 0.3 |
| | MR | 213 | 0.5 | 95 | 0.2 | 297 | 0.4 | 199 | 0.2 | 11 | 0.1 | 12 | 0.1 |
| | MultD | 95 | 0.2 | 25 | 0.1 | 196 | 0.2 | 45 | 0.1 | 30 | 0.2 | 5 | x |
| | All | 308 | 0.7 | 120 | 0.3 | 493 | 0.6 | 244 | 0.3 | 41 | 0.2 | 17 | 0.1 |
| The Bronx | Autism | 520 | 0.7 | 20 | 0.0 | 705 | 0.5 | 30 | 0.0 | 68 | 0.8 | 10 | 0.1 |
| | ED | 690 | 1.0 | 1041 | 1.5 | 826 | 0.6 | 1167 | 0.9 | 29 | 0.3 | 56 | 0.6 |
| | MR | 366 | 0.5 | 210 | 0.3 | 558 | 0.4 | 390 | 0.3 | 25 | 0.3 | 17 | 0.2 |
| | MultD | 177 | 0.3 | 45 | 0.1 | 333 | 0.3 | 73 | 0.1 | 20 | 0.2 | 6 | x |
| | All | 1753 | 2.5 | 1316 | 1.9 | 2422 | 1.8 | 1660 | 1.3 | 142 | 1.6 | 89 | 1.0 |
| Brooklyn | Autism | 670 | 0.5 | 37 | 0.0 | 281 | 0.3 | 34 | 0.0 | 248 | 0.5 | 67 | 0.1 |
| | ED | 1464 | 1.0 | 1803 | 1.2 | 483 | 0.6 | 668 | 0.8 | 167 | 0.4 | 259 | 0.6 |
| | MR | 727 | 0.5 | 458 | 0.3 | 288 | 0.3 | 226 | 0.3 | 142 | 0.3 | 179 | 0.4 |
| | MultD | 349 | 0.2 | 72 | 0.1 | 172 | 0.2 | 47 | 0.1 | 129 | 0.3 | 37 | 0.1 |
| | All | 3210 | 2.2 | 2370 | 1.6 | 1224 | 1.4 | 975 | 1.1 | 686 | 1.5 | 542 | 1.2 |
| Queens | Autism | 381 | 0.6 | 16 | 0.0 | 310 | 0.8 | 31 | 0.1 | 319 | 0.8 | 44 | 0.1 |
| | ED | 926 | 1.4 | 892 | 1.4 | 320 | 0.8 | 435 | 1.1 | 201 | 0.5 | 205 | 0.5 |
| | MR | 274 | 0.4 | 147 | 0.2 | 250 | 0.6 | 145 | 0.4 | 105 | 0.3 | 58 | 0.2 |
| | MultD | 219 | 0.3 | 68 | 0.1 | 191 | 0.5 | 71 | 0.2 | 139 | 0.4 | 40 | 0.1 |
| | All | 1800 | 2.1 | 1123 | 1.7 | 1071 | 2.7 | 682 | 1.7 | 764 | 1.9 | 347 | 0.9 |
| Staten Island | Autism | 44 | 0.5 | 1 | x | 70 | 0.6 | 2 | x | 251 | 0.8 | 54 | 0.2 |
| | ED | 263 | 2.8 | 204 | 2.2 | 106 | 0.9 | 155 | 1.2 | 216 | 0.6 | 167 | 0.5 |
| | MR | 24 | 0.3 | 26 | 0.3 | 29 | 0.3 | 27 | 0.2 | 50 | 0.2 | 41 | 0.1 |
| | MultD | 28 | 0.3 | 6 | x | 21 | 0.2 | 2 | x | 66 | 0.2 | 10 | 0.0 |
| | All | 359 | 3.8 | 237 | 2.5 | 226 | 1.8 | 186 | 1.5 | 583 | 1.7 | 272 | 0.8 |
| Citywide | Autism | 1806 | 0.5 | 89 | 0.0 | 1614 | 0.4 | 122 | 0.0 | 946 | 0.6 | 198 | 0.1 |
| | ED | 3798 | 1.1 | 4533 | 1.4 | 2142 | 0.5 | 3007 | 0.7 | 653 | 0.4 | 749 | 0.5 |
| | MR | 1604 | 0.5 | 936 | 0.3 | 1419 | 0.4 | 1087 | 0.3 | 333 | 0.2 | 307 | 0.2 |
| | MultD | 1246 | 0.4 | 216 | 0.1 | 513 | 0.1 | 238 | 0.1 | 384 | 0.3 | 98 | 0.1 |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| All | 8454 | 2.5 | 5774 | 1.7 | 5688 | 1.4 | 4454 | 1.1 | 2316 | 1.6 | 1352 | 0.9 |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|

| Boroughs | Disabilities | Asian | | | | American Indian | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------|
| | | District 75 | | NonDist 75 | | Dist. 75 | | NonDist 75 | |
| | | No. | %Enr | No. | %Enr | No. | %Enr | No. | %Enr |
| Manhattan | Autism | 30 | 0.2 | 3 | x | 5 | x | 2 | x |
| | ED | 12 | 0.1 | 14 | 0.07 | 8 | x | 7 | x |
| | MR | 18 | 0.1 | 15 | 0.07 | 1 | x | 1 | x |
| | MultD | 20 | 0.1 | 4 | x | 4 | x | 0 | x |
| | All | 38 | 0.2 | 19 | 0.10 | 5 | x | 1 | x |
| The Bronx | Autism | 46 | 0.5 | 2 | x | 23 | 3.5 | 0 | x |
| | ED | 15 | 0.2 | 28 | 0.31 | 14 | 2.1 | 28 | 2.5 |
| | MR | 21 | 0.2 | 18 | 0.2 | 3 | x | 2 | x |
| | MultD | 17 | 0.2 | 6 | 0.61 | 5 | x | 2 | x |
| | All | 99 | 1.1 | 54 | 0.61 | 45 | 6.8 | 32 | 2.9 |
| Brooklyn | Autism | 70 | 0.2 | 11 | 0.03 | 10 | 0.90 | 2 | x |
| | ED | 14 | 0.0 | 49 | 0.13 | 25 | 2.2 | 32 | 2.3 |
| | MR | 50 | 0.1 | 52 | 0.14 | 10 | 0.90 | 2 | x |
| | MultD | 36 | 0.1 | 10 | 0.03 | 1 | x | 10 | 0.7 |
| | All | 170 | 0.5 | 122 | 0.32 | 46 | 4.1 | 46 | 3.3 |
| Queens | Autism | 204 | 0.3 | 17 | 0.02 | 9 | x | 0 | x |
| | ED | 56 | 0.1 | 79 | 0.11 | 18 | 0 | 15 | 1.4 |
| | MR | 111 | 0.2 | 86 | 0.12 | 4 | x | 1 | x |
| | MultD | 98 | 0.1 | 29 | 0.04 | 4 | x | 0 | x |
| | All | 469 | 0.7 | 211 | 0.29 | 35 | 0.1 | 16 | 1.5 |
| Staten Island | Autism | 25 | 0.5 | 0 | x | 0 | x | 1 | x |
| | ED | 5 | x | 10 | 0.21 | 5 | x | 3 | x |
| | MR | 7 | x | 2 | x | 0 | x | 0 | x |
| | MultD | 9 | x. | 0 | x | 0 | x | 0 | x |
| | All | 46 | 1.0 | 12 | 0.25 | 5 | x | 4 | x |
| Citywide | Autism | 375 | 0.3 | 33 | 0.02 | 47 | 1 | 5 | x |
| | ED | 102 | 0.1 | 180 | ..09 | 70 | 1.6 | 85 | 1.9 |
| | MR | 157 | 0.1 | 121 | 0.09 | 8 | x | 4 | x |
| | MultD | 180 | 0.1 | 49 | 0.03 | 14 | 0.3 | 12 | 0.3 |

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| | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| All | 814 | 0.6 | 383 | 0.27 | 139 | 3.1 | 106 | 2.4 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Table 17. Comparison of Staffing Ratios for Special Educators, Para-educators, Speech/Language Pathologists, Psychologists, and Social Workers, 2005-2006

| | Incidence | | Special Ed Teachers | | | Para-educators | | | Speech/Language Pathologists | | | Psychologists | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------|------------------|------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|--------|-----------|------------|
| | % Students w/Disability | SWD Enrollment | Number | Ratio To: | | Number | Ratio To: | | Number | % S/L Licensed* | Ratio To: | | Number | Ratio To: | |
| | | | | SWD | Enrollment | | SWD | Enrollment | | | SWD | Enrollment | | SWD | Enrollment |
| Alexandria (VA) | 17.4 | 1900 | 199 | 10 | 55 | 201 | 9 | 54 | 27 | | 70 | 405 | 21 | 90 | 520 |
| Atlanta | 8.8 | 4200 | 659 ³⁷ | 7 | 79 | 211 | 20 | 296 | 55 | | 76 | 945 | 24 | 175 | 2166 |
| Buffalo | 17.8 | 9289 | 798 | 12 | 65 | 402 | 23 | 130 | 125 | | 74 | 417 | 52 | 179 | 1003 |
| Chicago ³⁸ | 12.9 | 55050 | 4141 | 14 | 103 | 2387 | 24 | 194 | 339 | | 169 | 1259 | 240 | 238 | 1778 |
| Clark County | 10.9 | 31921 | 3019 | 11 | 98 | 2087 | 15 | 141 | 257 | | 124 | 1145 | 153 | 209 | 1923 |
| Dallas | 8.1 | 13000 | 880 | 15 | 182 | 750 | 17 | 213 | 105 | .86 | 124 | 1524 | 52 | 250 | 3077 |
| Evanston | 19.6 | 1238 | 94 | 13 | 67 | 92 | 13 | 69 | 24 | | 52 | 263 | 12 | 103 | 526 |
| Hartford | 15.89 | 3883 | 289 | 13 | 84 | 240 ³⁹ | 16 | 102 | 46 | | 84 | 531 | 23 | 168 | 1062 |
| Homwd-Floss, IL | 267 | 2911 | 18 | | | 23 | | | 1.6 | | | | 1.8 | | |
| Kalamazoo | 13.0 | 1462 | 68 | 22 | 154 | 63 | 23 | 167 | 11.5 | | 127 | 913 | 11.5 | 127 | 913 |
| Kyrene (AZ) | 10.3 | 1909 | 126 | 15 | 147 | 100 | 19 | 185 | 37 | | 52 | 501 | 14 | 136 | 1323 |
| Lakota (OH) | 8.8 | 1547 | 115 | 14 | 152 | 120 | 13 | 146 | 30.4 | | 51 | 576 | 11 | 141 | 1593 |
| Los Angeles ⁴⁰ | 9.65 | 76752 | 4971 | 17 | 149 | 7490 | 11 | 100 | 122 | | 700 | 6073 | 566 | 151 | 1309 |
| Memphis | 15.5 | 18226 | 854 | 21 | 138 | 683 | 27 | 173 | 56 | .96 | 325 | 2105 | 61 | 299 | 1932 |
| Miami-Dade | 11.8 | 43208 | 3538 | 12 | 103 | 1476 | 29 | 248 | 100 | | 432 | 3658 | 252 | 171 | 1452 |
| New Bedford | 20.4 | 2778 | 230 | 12 | 59 | 305 | 9 | 45 | 33 | | 84 | 412 | 10 | 277 | 1359 |
| Newport (RI) | 21.6 | 650 | 22 | 30 | 136 | 35 | 19 | 86 | 6 | .96 | 108 | 500 | 3 | 216 | 1000 |
| New York City ⁴¹ | 11.1 | 137930 | 11810 | 13 | 105 | 12516 | 12 | 99 | 2015 | | 75 | 617 | 1170 | 128 | 1062 |
| NYC (D. 75) | | 23000 | 2500 | 9 | - | 5935 | 3.9 | - | 434 | | 53 | - | 55 | 418 | - |
| Norfolk | 13.89 | 37,000 | 428 | 12 | 86 | 237 | 22 | 156 | 42 | | 122 | 881 | 23 | 223 | 1608 |
| Passaic (NJ) | 17.2 | 13563 | 187 | | | 135 | | | 19 | | | | 19 | | |
| Philadelphia | 12 | 26,814 | 1676 | 16 | 134 | 437 | 61 ⁴² | 514 | 142 | | 188 | 1582 | 135 | 109 | 1665 |
| Pittsburgh | | 33,905 | 655 | | | 322 | | | 60 | | | | 22 | | |

³⁷ Includes central office administrators

³⁸ From 8/26/05 NYC, NY report (see F.N. 4) Data from Chicago Public Schools (04/05) – *number of students with disabilities based on 6-21 year olds and total population from district Web site

³⁹ From 2004-5 Hartford School District Strategic School Profile

⁴⁰ From 8/26/05 NYC, NY report (see F.N. 4) Data from Los Angeles Public Schools (04/05) – *

⁴¹ 03-04 data from Tom Hehir, et. al., Report of NYC August 26, 2005 - *

⁴² City behavioral health agencies provide paraprofessional support in the schools

Improving Special Education in New York City's District 75

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|------|-------|------|-----------|-----|------|-----------|-----|----|-----|------------|------|------------------|------------|------|
| Pr. George's, MD | 11.6 | 15362 | 1258 | 12 | 106 | 1125 | 14 | 118 | 67 | | 229 | 1985 | 71 | 216 | 1873 |
| South Bend | 26.5 | 5573 | 350 | 16 | 60 | 306 | 18 | 69 | 48 | .9 | 116 | 438 | 19 ⁴³ | 293 | 1105 |
| Stafford, TX | 9.6 | 289 | 24 | 12 | 125 | 16 | 18 | 187 | 6 | .16 | 48 | 500 | 2 | 144 | 1500 |
| St. Louis City | 16 | 5696 | 652 | 9 | 54 | 229 | 25 | 154 | 97 | .79 | 59 | 363 | 35 | 163 | 1007 |
| Sun Prairie, WI | 810 | 6000 | 63 | 13 | 95 | 150 | 5.4 | 40 | 14 | | 57 | 425 | 5 | 162 | 1200 |
| Trenton PS, NJ | 19.5 | 2679 | 225 | 12 | 61 | 175 | 15 | 78 | 22 | | 122 | 624 | 15 | 179 | 915 |
| Webster, MA | 17.6 | 349 | 316 | 17 | 96 | 28 | 12 | 71 | 6 | .83 | 58 | 331 | 1.2 | 291 | 1653 |
| Waukegan, IL | 16.1 | 2657 | 171 | 15 | 96 | 131 | 20 | 125 | 33 | | 81 | 503 | 17 | 156 | 970 |
| Yonkers, NY | 14.9 | 3830 | 326 | 12 | 79 | 290 | 13 | 89 | 30 | | 128 | 857 | 32 | 120 | 803 |
| U. S. | | | | 16 | | | 18 | | | | 157 | | | 223 | |

Social Workers, Nurses, OTs and PTs

| | Social Workers | | | Nurses | | | Occupational Therapists | | | Physical Therapists | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|--------|------|-----------|------------|
| | Number | Ratio To: | | Number | Ratio To: | | Number | Licensed* | Ratio To: | | Number | Lic. | Ratio To: | |
| | | SWD | Enrollment | | SWD | Enrollment | | | SWD | Enrollment | | | SWD | Enrollment |
| Alexandria City, VA | 25 | 76 | 437 | 17 | 112 | 643 | 8 | | 238 | 1366 | 3 | | 633 | 3643 |
| Atlanta, GA | 33 | 127 | 1576 | 27 | 156 | 1926 | 6 | | 700 | 8667 | 3 | | 1400 | 17333 |
| Buffalo, NY | 36 | 258 | 1449 | 44 | 211 | 1186 | 53 | .43 | 175 | 984 | 16.4 | | 566 | 3181 |
| Chicago, IL | 357 | 160 | 1196 | NA | - | - | 101 | | 556 | 4226 | 37 | | 1548 | 11535 |
| Clark County, NY | 10 | - | - | 166 | 192 | 1773 | 76 | | 420 | 3872 | 28 | .89 | 1140 | 10500 |
| Dallas ISD, TX | 28 | 464 | 5714 | 183 | 71 | 874 | 16 | | 813 | 10,000 | 1 | | - | - |
| Evanston, IL | 25 | 50 | 253 | 18 | 69 | 351 | 5 | | 248 | 1263 | 1 | | 1238 | 6314 |
| Hartford, CT | 71 | 54 | 344 | 57⁴⁴ | 68 | 428 | | | | | | | | |
| Homewood-Flossmor, IL | 3 | | | 1 | | | .5 | | | | 0 | | | |
| Kalamazoo, MI | 4.5 | 325 | 2333 | 2 | 731 | 5250 | 1.5 | | 975 | 7000 | 1 | | 1462 | 10500 |
| Kyrene, OH | 6 | 318 | 3088 | 4 | 477 | 4630 | 8 | .38 | 239 | 2316 | 2 | | 955 | 9265 |
| Lakota, OH | 2 | 773 | 8760 | 14.5 | 107 | 1208 | 8 | .5 | 193 | 2190 | 2 | .5 | 773 | 8760 |
| Los Angeles, CA | 38 | - | - | NA | - | - | 140 | | 610 | 5293 | 24 | | 3560 | - |
| Memphis, TN | 41 | 445 | 2875 | 46 | 396 | 2562 | 18 | .63 | 1013 | 6548 | 13.5 | .93 | 1350 | 8730 |
| Miami-Dade, FL | 150 | 288 | 2439 | 100 | 432 | 3658 | 62 | | 697 | 5900 | 15 | | 2881 | 24386 |
| New Bedford, MA | 38 ⁴⁵ | 73 | 358 | 29 | 96 | 469 | 8 | .75 | 347 | 1699 | 3 | | 926 | 4531 |
| Newport, RI | 3 | 217 | 1000 | 5 | 130 | 600 | 3 | .33 | 217 | 1000 | 2 | | 325 | 1500 |
| NYC, NY | 1440 | 104 | 863 | N/A | - | - | 1151 | | 131 | 1080 | 625 | | 241 | 1988 |

⁴³ Includes 4 diagnosticians

⁴⁴ Includes 7 nurse practitioners and nurse assistants

⁴⁵ Refers to School Adjustment Counselors

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|------------|------|-------------------|-----|------|------|-----|------------|------|-----|-----|------------|-------|
| NYC, NY (Dist. 75) | 103 | 223 | - | 204 | 113 | - | 173 | | 133 | - | 201 | | 114 | - |
| Norfolk, VG | 23 | 223 | 1609 | - | | | 13 | .92 | 395 | 2846 | 7 | | 734 | 5286 |
| Passaic City, NJ | 19 | | | 30 | | | C | | | | C | | | |
| Philadelphia, PA | 0 | - | - | 295 | 91 | 761 | 23 | | 1165 | 9772 | 20 | | 1340 | 11238 |
| Pittsburgh, PA | 45 | | | 29 | | | 24 | 11 | | | 13 | 11 | | |
| Prince George's Cty, MD | 5 | - | - | 208 ⁴⁶ | 74 | 639 | 56 | | 274 | 2375 | 27 | .96 | 569 | 4926 |
| South Bend, I | 25 | 223 | 840 | 24 | 232 | 875 | 12 | .92 | 464 | 1750 | 3 | .33 | 1857 | 7000 |
| Stafford, TX | 0 | - | - | 5 | 57 | 600 | 1 | | 289 | 3000 | 1 | | 289 | 3000 |
| St. Louis, MO | 48 | 119 | 734 | 86 | 66 | 410 | 21 | | 271 | 1678 | 5 | | 1139 | 7048 |
| Sun Prairie, WI | 5.6 | 144 | 1071 | 1 | 810 | 6000 | 5 | | 162 | 1200 | 2.6 | | 311 | 2307 |
| Trenton PS, NU | 45 | 60 | 305 | 21 | 128 | 653 | 5 | | 536 | 2744 | 1 | | 2679 | 13720 |
| Webster, MA | 1.5 | 233 | 1322 | 3 | 116 | 661 | 2.2 | .54 | 159 | 902 | 1 | | 349 | 1984 |
| Waukegan, IL | 28 | 91 | 580 | 27 ⁴⁷ | 98 | 610 | 12.6 | .84 | 211 | 1308 | 5 | .8 | 332 | 3296 |
| Yonkers, NY | 16 | 239 | 1605 | 54 | 71 | 476 | 32 | | 120 | 803 | 14 | | 274 | 1835 |
| U. S. | | 363 | | | | | | | 472 | | | | 959 | |

⁴⁶ Includes 48 vacancies

⁴⁷ Includes 16 certified school nurses

Improving Special Education in New York City's District 75

Table 18. Percent of District 75 Scoring at Various Performance Levels on Standardized Assessments by School, 2007

| Subject/School | Number Tested | Percent Level 1 | Percent Level 2 | Percent Level 3 + 4 |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| English language arts | | | | |
| PS 35M | 38 | 57.9 | 36.8 | 5.73 |
| PS 79M | 7 | 14.3 | 57.1 | 28.6 |
| PS 94M | 141 | 51.1 | 41.8 | 7.1 |
| PS 138M | 47 | 44.7 | 40.4 | 14.9 |
| PS 169M | 181 | 53.6 | 43.1 | 3.3 |
| PS 226M | 5 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| PS 811M | 151 | 51.7 | 45.7 | 2.6 |
| PS 4K | 64 | 57.8 | 31.3 | 10.9 |
| PS 36K | 179 | 50.8 | 41.9 | 7.3 |
| PS 53K | 84 | 32.1 | 57.1 | 10.7 |
| PS 77K | 2 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| PS 140K | 168 | 57.1 | 38.1 | 4.8 |
| PS 141K | 112 | 49.1 | 42.7 | 8.0 |
| PS 231K | 171 | 61.4 | 32.2 | 6.4 |
| PS 368K | 217 | 66.4 | 29.0 | 4.6 |
| PS 369K | 270 | 52.2 | 41.1 | 6.7 |
| PS 370K | 24 | 25.0 | 58.3 | 16.7 |
| PS 371K | 5 | 60.0 | 40.0 | 0.0 |
| PS 396K | 39 | 59.0 | 33.3 | 7.7 |
| PS 753 | 5 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 |
| PS 771K | 107 | 48.6 | 40.2 | 11.2 |
| PS 811K | NA | NA | NA | 33.3 |
| PS 4Q | 120 | 44.2 | 35.0 | 20.8 |
| PS 9Q | 228 | 34.6 | 57.5 | 7.9 |
| PS 23Q | 155 | 43.9 | 41.9 | 14.2 |
| PS 75Q | 146 | 65.8 | 27.4 | 6.8 |
| PS 177Q | 19 | 36.8 | 57.9 | 5.3 |
| PS 224Q | 123 | 43.9 | 39.0 | 17.1 |

Improving Special Education in New York City's District 75

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| PS 233Q | 10 | 20.0 | 60.0 | 20.0 |
| PS 255Q | 14 | 0.0 | 64.3 | 35.7 |
| PS 256Q | 177 | 53.0 | 41.8 | 5.1 |
| PS 752Q | 24 | 45.8 | 54.2 | 0.0 |
| PS 811Q | 20 | 20.0 | 50.0 | 30.0 |
| PS 993Q | 23 | 52.2 | 21.7 | 26.1 |
| PS 25R | 175 | 32.0 | 49.7 | 18.3 |
| PS 37R | 8 | 12.5 | 50.0 | 37.5 |
| PS 373R | 99 | 43.4 | 45.5 | 11.1 |
| PS 721R | 17 | 5.9 | 76.5 | 17.6 |
| PS 10X | 124 | 41.1 | 47.6 | 11.3 |
| PS 12X | 53 | 56.6 | 34.0 | 9.4 |
| PS 17X | 150 | 62.0 | 34.7 | 3.3 |
| PS 168X | 142 | 46.5 | 48.6 | 4.9 |
| PS 176X | 16 | 6.3 | 68.8 | 25.0 |
| PS 186X | 166 | 66.9 | 30.7 | 2.4 |
| PS 188X | 173 | 48.0 | 46.2 | 5.8 |
| PS 352X | 93 | 69.9 | 25.8 | 4.3 |
| PS 721X | 17 | 52.9 | 47.1 | 0.0 |
| PS 723X | 225 | 64.4 | 29.8 | 5.8 |
| PS 754X | 24 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 |
| Home & Hospital | 100 | 33.0 | 43.0 | 24.0 |
| Totals for D75 | 4,879 | 48.6 | 39.7 | 11.7 |
| Mathematics | | | | |
| PS 35M | 40 | 70.0 | 15.0 | 15.0 |
| PS 79M | 7 | 14.3 | 57.1 | 28.6 |
| PS 94M | 134 | 53.7 | 28.4 | 17.9 |
| PS 138M | 46 | 28.3 | 45.7 | 26.1 |
| PS 169M | 183 | 62.3 | 30.1 | 7.7 |
| PS 226M | 5 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| PS 811M | 153 | 63.4 | 26.8 | 9.8 |
| PS 4K | 65 | 44.6 | 35.4 | 20.0 |

Improving Special Education in New York City's District 75

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-------|------|------|
| PS 36K | 187 | 53.5 | 36.9 | 9.6 |
| PS 53K | 83 | 47.0 | 34.9 | 18.1 |
| PS 77K | 3 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 |
| PS 140K | 166 | 77.7 | 21.1 | 1.2 |
| PS 141K | 118 | 72.9 | 22.9 | 4.2 |
| PS 231K | 171 | 70.8 | 22.2 | 7.0 |
| PS 368K | 204 | 59.3 | 28.9 | 11.8 |
| PS 369K | 264 | 65.5 | 28.0 | 6.4 |
| PS 370K | 34 | 14.7 | 23.5 | 61.8 |
| PS 371K | 2 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| PS 396K | 40 | 55.0 | 20.0 | 25.0 |
| PS 753 | 7 | 85.7 | 0.0 | 14.3 |
| PS 771K | 108 | 39.8 | 39.8 | 20.4 |
| PS 811K | 4 | 75.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 |
| PS 4Q | 124 | 35.5 | 30.6 | 33.9 |
| PS 9Q | 227 | 49.3 | 37.9 | 12.8 |
| PS 23Q | 130 | 49.2 | 34.6 | 16.2 |
| PS 75Q | 152 | 49.3 | 34.9 | 15.8 |
| PS 177Q | 20 | 60.0 | 35.0 | 5.0 |
| PS 224Q | 126 | 53.2 | 24.6 | 22.2 |
| PS 233Q | 11 | 27.3 | 18.2 | 54.5 |
| PS 255Q | 14 | 14.3 | 7.1 | 78.6 |
| PS 256Q | 169 | 55.6 | 34.3 | 10.1 |
| PS 752Q | 20 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| PS 811Q | 20 | 20.0 | 30.0 | 50.0 |
| PS 993Q | 23 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 39.1 |
| PS 25R | 184 | 47.3 | 35.3 | 17.4 |
| PS 37R | 7 | 14.3 | 28.6 | 57.1 |
| PS 373R | 102 | 36.3 | 23.5 | 40.2 |
| PS 721R | 17 | 17.6 | 41.2 | 41.2 |
| PS 10X | 128 | 52.3 | 33.6 | 14.1 |
| PS 12X | 61 | 54.1 | 23.0 | 23.0 |
| PS 17X | 151 | 78.8 | 15.2 | 6.0 |

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| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| PS 168X | 139 | 49.6 | 34.5 | 15.8 |
| PS 176X | 16 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 87.5 |
| PS 186X | 161 | 74.5 | 19.3 | 6.2 |
| PS 188X | 176 | 54.0 | 29.5 | 16.5 |
| PS 352X | 107 | 71.0 | 18.7 | 10.3 |
| PS 721X | 15 | 86.7 | 13.3 | 0.0 |
| PS 723X | 218 | 77.5 | 15.6 | 6.9 |
| PS 754X | 28 | 96.4 | 3.6 | 0.0 |
| Home & Hospital | 86 | 43.0 | 34.9 | 22.1 |
| Totals for D75 | 4,875 | 54.8 | 27.5 | 17.6 |

Table 19. Benchmark Age Enrollment (Standard vs. Alternative Assessment)

| | | Year | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| | | 2002/2003 | | 2003/2004 | | 2004/2005 | | 2005/2006 | | 2006/2007 | |
| | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Level | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EC | Alternate | 1429 | 8.37 | 1517 | 8.27 | 1687 | 8.90 | 1941 | 10.10 | 2086 | 10.89 |
| | Standardize | 1085 | 6.35 | 1137 | 6.20 | 1135 | 5.99 | 990 | 5.15 | 920 | 4.80 |
| EL | Alternate | 1594 | 9.34 | 1727 | 9.42 | 1737 | 9.17 | 1808 | 9.41 | 1899 | 9.91 |
| | Standardize | 2511 | 14.71 | 2733 | 14.90 | 2694 | 14.22 | 2523 | 13.13 | 2304 | 12.02 |
| JH | Alternate | 1333 | 7.81 | 1694 | 9.24 | 1876 | 9.90 | 1964 | 10.22 | 1847 | 9.64 |
| | Standardize | 2583 | 15.13 | 2808 | 15.31 | 2820 | 14.88 | 2590 | 13.48 | 2493 | 13.01 |
| HS | Alternate | 4897 | 28.68 | 5073 | 27.66 | 5207 | 27.48 | 5525 | 28.75 | 5781 | 30.17 |
| | Standardize | 1643 | 9.62 | 1653 | 9.01 | 1790 | 9.45 | 1878 | 9.77 | 1833 | 9.57 |
| TOTAL | | 17075 | 100.00 | 18342 | 100.00 | 18946 | 100.00 | 19219 | 100.00 | 19163 | 100.00 |

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Table 20. Enrollment (Standard vs. Alternative Assessment)

| | Year | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | 2002/2003 | | 2003/2004 | | 2004/2005 | | 2005/2006 | | 2006/2007 | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Alternative | 9253 | 54.2 | 10011 | 54.6 | 10507 | 55.5 | 11238 | 58.5 | 11613 | 60.6 |
| Standard | 7822 | 45.8 | 8331 | 45.4 | 8439 | 44.5 | 7981 | 41.5 | 7550 | 39.4 |
| Total | 17075 | 100.0 | 18342 | 100.0 | 18946 | 100.0 | 19219 | 100.0 | 19163 | 100.0 |

Appendix B. Individuals Interviewed

January 9, 2008

- Dr. Marcia V. Lyles, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, NYCDOE
- Lisa Dare, Chief Operating Officer, Division of Teaching and Learning, NYCDOE
- Thomas Huser, Director of Strategic Communications, Division of Teaching and Learning, NYCDOE
- Carol Breuer, PA President's Council, DLT
- Betsy Farren, Parent, DLT
- Patty Saber-McGuire, PTA Co-President, P224Q
- Anna Blanchette, PA Pres 226M, DLT
- Nadine McNeil, PTA Secretary, PS 176X, DLT
- Ellen McHugh, Member, Citywide Council on Special Education/Lead Coordinator, Parent to Parent
- John Elgert, President, Citywide Council on Special Education
- John Sylvester, UFT D.75 Rep., DLT
- Ellie Greenberg, Principal, PS4K
- Adrienne Edelstein, Principal P188x
- Debra Cataldo, CPAC Representative for D75 and Vice-President of PA Presidents Council
- Mary Beth Fadilici, Parent Educator, Parent to Parent
- Meri Krassner, Parent, Parent/Coalition for D.75
- Jacklyn Okin-Barney, Staff Attorney, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
- Lourdes Rivera-Putz, Executive Director, United We Stand of New York
- Mary Somoza, Director, Metropolitan Parent Center, Sinergia
- Jacqueline Tripodi, Regional Coordinator, Parent to Parent of New York State
- RueZalia Watkins, Advocate, Mental Health Association of NYC
- Lisa Isaacs, Senior Staff Attorney, NY Lawyers for the Public Interest
- Vicki Sudhalter, Head, Clinical Psycholinguistics, George A. Jervis Clinic
- Maggie Moroff, Special Education Policy Coordinator, Advocates for Children
- Janice Silber, Helpline Supervisor, Advocates for Children
- Linda Wernikoff, Executive Director, Office of Special Education Initiatives, NYCDOE
- Bonnie Brown, Superintendent, District 75, NYCDOE
- Gary Hecht, Deputy Superintendent, District 75, NYCDOE
- Lorraine Boyhan, Director, Office of Curriculum and Accountability, District 75, NYCDOE
- Helen Kaufman, Administrative Assistant Superintendent, Clinical Services, District 75, NYCDOE
- Donna Dimino, Cohort 1 Leader, District 75, NYCDOE
- Joanna Lenczewski, Cohort 4 Leader, District 75, NYCDOE
- Barbara Joseph, Cohort 5 Leader, District 75, NYCDOE
- Ketler Louissaint, Self Management Schools Cohort Leader, District 75, NYCDOE
- Elizabeth Sciabarra, CEO, Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations (OSEPO), NYCDOE
- Ellen G. Newman, Senior Executive Director of Special Education Enrollment, OSEPO, NYCDOE

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- Lester Katz, Principal, PS 752Q
- Kathleen LeFevre, Principal, S12X
- Yvonne Tavares, Principal, PS168X
- Adrienne Edelstein, Principal, PS188K
- Susan Goldberg, Principal, PS370K
- William Strein, Principal, PS811K
- William Fiorelli, Principal, PS37R
- William Bates, Principal, South Richmond High School. PS/IS25R

February 11-13, 2008

- Linda Wernikoff, Executive Director, Office of Special Education Initiatives, NYCDOE
- Dr. George York, Principal, Bronx High School for the Visual Arts
- James Philemy, Principal, PS/IS208Q
- Thomas Staebell, Principal, PS15M
- Teri Ahearn, Principal, IS14K
- Dr. Rebecca Cort, Deputy Commissioner, NY State Education Department (NYSED)
- Patricia Shubert, New York City Regional Coordinator, NYSED
- James DeLorenzo, Statewide Coordinator, Special Education, NYSED
- Dr. Randi Herman, First Vice President, CSA
- Audrey Fuentes, Executive Director, Field Services, CSA
- Barbara Hanson, Principal, P10X, District 75 Member, Executive Board, CSA
- Eleanor Greenberg, Principal, P4K, District 75 Chair, CSA
- Eric Nadelstern, CEO, Empowerment Support Organization, NYCDOE
- Allison Avera, Chief of Staff, Empowerment Support Organization, NYCDOE
- Dr. Dorita Gibson, Deputy CEO, Integrated Curriculum and Instruction (ICI), Learning Support Organization
- Charles Amundsen, Deputy CEO, Integrated Curriculum and Instruction (ICI), Learning Support Organization
- Carmen Alvarez, Vice President for Special Education, UFT
- Velma Sifontes, Bronx Representative, Speech Improvement Chapter, UFT
- LeRoy Barr, Director of Staff, UFT
- Alphonse Mancuso, District 75 Representative, UFT
- Philip Sylvester, District 75 District Representative, UFT
- Lisa Mendel, Special Education Representative, UFT
- Walter O'Leary, Special Education, UFT Representative
- Elizabeth Truly, Special Education Legal Counsel, UFT
- Mindy Karten Bornemann, Chapter Leader – Speech Teachers, UFT
- Leslie McDonnell, Chapter Leader – Occupational & Physical Therapists, UFT
- Mary O'Leary, Chapter Leader – UFT School Nurses, UFT
- B.J. Darby, Chapter Leader – Nurses & OT/PT Supervisors, UFT
- Ann Englesbe, Chapter Leader – School Social Workers/Psychologists, UFT
- Angela Reformato, Chapter Leader – Guidance Counselors, UFT
- Rose O'Conner – Chapter Leader – Hearing Education Services, UFT
- Milton Williams – Chapter Leader – Vision Education Services, UFT
- Shernice Blackman, UFT Chapter Leader

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- Chris Policano, Director of Communications, UFT
- Jean Darbouze, School Psychologist, P35M
- Katherine Deats, Occupational Therapist Supervisor, P138M
- Judith Avitabile, Physical Therapist, P176X at 178X
- Kelli Kruger, Vision Services, Manhattan and the Bronx
- Marvin Bevans, Hearing Services, Manhattan Related Services
- Julie Fox, Speech Therapy, P138M at P33M
- John Avignone, Speech Therapy, P138M at 47M, P721 M at D75
- Alison Morales, Speech Therapy, P723X at Astor Child Guidance
- Michael Cantares, Physical Therapy, P811Q
- Lourdes Mendez, P352X
- Richard Marowitz, PS255Q
- Jacqueline Keane, PS138M
- Susan Finn, PSM169
- Gloria Sorokin, P53K
- Arthur Fusco, P141K
- Rima Ritholtz, P176X
- Ronnie Schuster, P94M
- Rose Tomaselli, P224Q
- Mary McInerney, P721M
- Jesse Margolis, Director, Evaluation and Reporting Group, Office of Accountability
- Michael Best, General Counsel, NYCDOE
- Marykate O'Neil, Director, Special Education Unit, Office of the General Counsel, NYCDOE
- Aimee Dorosin, Director of Policy and Planning
- Jeffrey Shear, Chief of Staff to Deputy Chancellor for Finance & Administration
- Shauna Anthony, Staff Analyst
- Sandy Brawer, Integrated Service Center Deputy Executive Director for Business
- Bill Heslin, Office of Pupil Transportation
- Mike Nolan, Office of Portfolio Development
- D.J. Meehan, P224Q
- Jeanette Downs, P138@P22M
- Eric Markiewicz, P721M
- Nicole Gagnon, PS138M
- Linda Hinnant, P4k
- Naomi Jandorf, P4k

Appendix C. Documents Reviewed

Data Reports

- Children First Q & As & Special Ed Charts on Performance, Settings, Co-Teaching, Special Ed Support etc.
- December 2006 PD1/4 Child Count- NYC Public Schools
- December 2006 PD1/4 Child Count- NYC Public Schools School Age Only- District 75 (at large and by school)
- December 2006 PD1/4 Child Count- NYC Public Schools School Age Only- District 75 (% Setting)
- 2006-7 State Performance Plan PD10-Preschool Outcomes
- Number of Students by School, Site and Programs as of 1/2/2008
- ELA Test Scores Grades 3-8 2006-7 (by school for D.75)
- Math Test Scores Grades 3-8 2006-7 (by school for D.75)
- District 75 Register
 - by school
 - by site
 - by program (work, inclusion, PK)
 - by ratio
 - by testing category
 - (standard assessment alternate)
- Number of Special Schools
- Suspension Analysis
- Transition Statistics
- LRE Report
- Pre K Discharge to LRE
- Discharge to MRE (more restrictive environment) Institutional Settings
- New York State Department of Education's Focused Review Quality Improvement Process (FRQUIP) explanation and four sample reports for District 75
 - QIP HES
 - New 2006 P. 371 QIP
 - 35M Final QIP
 - 370 QIP
- District 75 Graduation Statistics
- NAEP 2007 Trial Urban District Assessment – New York City Highlights (November 15, 2007)
- Results of Citywide Council on Special Education Parent Survey for Queens, Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx and Staten Island (March 5, 2007)
- District 75 FY08 Initial School Allocations
- FY 08 District 75 Budget Methodology and Management Matrix
- D75 FY 08 Preliminary Allocation
- Budgeted Related Services Vacancies (February 14, 2008)
- Number of Students by Disability for Public and Nonpublic Schools – December 2007

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- Staffing Report for NYCDOE

General Reports

- Comprehensive Management Review and Evaluation of Special Education by Thomas Hehir, Ed.D et. al.
- Sample of Quality Review Final Reports: Francis Lewis High School (HS430)
- New York State Performance Plan for FY 2008 submitted to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

Directory Information and Organization Charts

- District 75 School Directory (<http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/data/>)
- District 75 Staff Listing
- Citywide Council on Special Education- Parent Survey
- ED Anonymous Preschool Complaint for Child in 12:1:1
- District 75 Organization Chart
- Organization Chart for Deputy Chancellor Lyles for Teaching and Learning
- District 75 Administrators' Directory

School-Based Data

- PS752Q - Queens School for Career Development
 - School Organization 07-08
 - Quality Review Summary Feedback June 4-5, 2007
 - 2005-6 Annual School Report
 - Focus Group Summary
 - Facilities Assessment
- PS 12X Lewis and Clark
 - School Organization for 07-08
 - 2005-6 Annual School Report
- PS 168 The Success Express
 - School Organization for 07-08
 - NCLB Disaggregated Data
 - Students to LRE
 - Quality Review Summary Feedback Nov. 7-8, 2007
 - 2005-6 Annual School Report
 - P168 Flow Chart of P20 and Cluster Sites
 - How Are We Doing? NY Quality Review, Attendance, ELA and Math Achievements and Special Accomplishments
- PS 188
 - Final Report 2007-08 Quality
 - 2005-6 Annual School Report
 - School Organization for 07-08
 - P188 Student Enrollment (Includes Cluster Sites)
 - Mandated Related Services

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- Power of Choice Program
- 370K @ PS 100
 - School Register
 - Quality Review Report
 - The Jim Thorpe School Table of Organization
 - Fiscal Year 2008 Budget
 - 2005/06 Annual School Report
 - The New York State School Report Card
- PS 811
 - 2005/06 Annual School Report, School Register, Quality Review Report
- PS 37R
 - 2005/06 Annual Report, Quality Review Report
- PS 25R
 - 2005/06 Annual School Report, Register, Quality Review Report

Memoranda

- From Bonnie Brown and Gary Hecht with D75 Demographic Trends from 2002-07
- From Bonnie Brown: Issues related to District 75 Co-located Programs
- From Bonnie Brown: Asperger Program Success

Other

- NYCDOE Sample Progress Report
- NYCDOE Principal Performance Review template
- Children First: Special Education Presentation to CEC Executive Bd
- Brian Ellner's Response to the CCSE's Year End Report (May, 2007)
- RFP Special Education Student Information System #R0587
- February 6, 2008 Snapshot of Hits on D75 Web site
- Citywide Council on Special education Parent Survey template
- Continuum of Services for Students with Disabilities
- Students with Disabilities Transitioning from Preschool to School-Age Programs
- Strategies, Techniques and Options Prior to Placement
- Web sites of NYCDOE for Special Education, Office of Special Education Initiatives and District 75
- Web site for NY State Department of Education: State Performance Plan

Appendix D. Site Visit Meeting Schedules

January 10, 2008

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| 9:00 am- 10:00 am | Deputy Chancellor Teaching & Learning Chief Operating Officer Teaching & Learning Director of Communication for T & L |
| 10:00 am- 11:15 am | D75 Leadership Team |
| 11:15 am –12:45 pm | OSEI Parent Meeting |
| 12:45 pm-1:15 pm | Working Lunch |
| 1:30pm-2:00 pm | Executive Director, Office of Special Education Initiatives |
| 2:00 pm- 3:00 pm | Superintendent of D75 and Deputy Superintendent |
| 3:00 pm –4:15 pm | District 75 Directors |
| 4:30 pm- 5:30 pm | Placement Officers |
| 5:30 pm –6:00 pm | Discussion of Next Steps and Work Plan for balance of Site Visit |
| 7:15 – 9:30 pm | Dinner and Debriefing from the day |

January 11, 2008

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 7:15 am -3:00 pm | School Site Visits <u>Group 1:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PS 752Q• PS 12X• PS 168X• PS 188X <u>Group 2:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 370K @ PS 100• PS 811• PS 37R• PS 25R |
|------------------|---|

February 10, 2008

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm | Team Dinner and Meeting to Review Site Visit |
|-------------------|--|

February 11, 2008

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| 8:30 am–9:45am | Executive Director, Office of Special Education Initiatives |
| 10:00am–11:15am | General Ed principals with co-located D75 schools |
| 11:30 am- 12:30 pm | NY State Education Department |
| 12:30 pm-1:00 pm | Lunch |
| 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm | Council of Supervisors and Administrators |
| 2:00 pm -3:00 pm | School Support Organizations |
| 4:00 pm-5:30 pm | United Federation of Teachers |
| 7:00 pm-9:30 pm | Team Dinner and Work on Recommendations |

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February 12, 2008

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 8:30 am- 9:45 am | Related Services |
| 10:00 am-11:15am | D75 principals with multiple sites |
| 11:15 am- 12:00 pm | Accountability |
| 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm | Lunch |
| 1:00 pm- 2:00 pm | Legal |
| 2:30 pm- 3:00 pm | Policy |
| 3:00 pm -4:00 pm | Facilities, Budget and Transportation |
| 4:00 pm-5:30 pm | D75 Teachers |
| 7:00 pm- 12:00 pm | Working Dinner |

February 13, 2008

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 8:30 am- 1:15 pm | Team Development of Recommendations |
| 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm | Debriefing with Dr. Marcia V. Lyles |
| 3:15 pm-4:00 pm | Meeting with Chancellor Joel I. Klein |

Appendix E. Strategic Support Team

Sue Gamm, Esq.

Sue Gamm is the former Chief Specialized Services Officer for the Chicago Public Schools and Division Director for the Office for Civil Rights, Region V (Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin). Ms. Gamm is a nationally known expert on special education. She has participated on Strategic Support Teams provided by the Council of the Great City Schools for school districts in the District of Columbia (1998), Guilford County, N.C., (2003), Richmond, Va., (2003), St. Louis (2003), Charleston, S.C., (2005) and Milwaukee (2007). She recently served as consulting attorney on the Council's *amicus* brief in support of New York City Department of Education (NCDOE) in *Board of Education of the City School District of the City of New York v. Tom F., On Behalf of Gilbert F., A Minor Child* (2007). Ms. Gamm currently consults with the Illinois State Board of Education on the state's monitoring of the Chicago Public Schools on least restrictive environment as part of the district's implementation of the *Corey H. v. ISBE* settlement agreement. Further, she consults with the Public Consulting Group and numerous school districts and state educational agencies and provides training at national, state, and local conferences on special education matters, particularly in the area of special education disproportionality. Ms. Gamm was an expert in 2006 for the Plaintiffs in *Blackman v. District of Columbia, et. al.*, Civil Action No. 97-1629 (PLF) Consolidated with Civil Action No. 97-2402 (PLF) in the areas of special education policies, procedures, and practices. In Baltimore, Ms. Gamm completed a review of special education services in 2004-05 for the city's public schools and was an expert for Plaintiffs, Vaughn G., et al. v. Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, et al., Civil Action No. MJG-84-1911. Ms. Gamm has also done extensive special education consultation on least restrictive environment issues for the Los Angeles County School District and is a consultant for the class action consent decree in Los Angeles. Finally, Ms. Gamm has provided expert advice over the past five years to the NYCDOE. This work included writing a *Principal's Quick Reference Guide to Special Education* (2003). She was also a contributor to the Hehir report on *Special Education Services and Processes* in 2004, 2005. Ms. Gamm graduated with high honors from the University of Illinois with a B.A. degree in regular and special education (1970) and also received a law degree from De Paul College of Law (1976). She is admitted to practice before the Illinois Bar, the Federal Bar, and the U.S. Supreme Court Bar.

Cathy Orlando

Ms. Orlando became the Executive Director for Special Education Curriculum and Intervention in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools last spring. She oversees the instructional and curricular practices for students with disabilities within the district; coordinates the inclusive practices initiative of the school district; and collaborates with district, regional, and school-site personnel in the delivery of services for students with disabilities. Before assuming her current position, Ms. Orlando supervised programs for students with learning disabilities in the school district and served as the facilitator for the Florida Inclusion Network and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools in the area of inclusive practices. Ms. Orlando also spent five years as an educational specialist for programs for students with severe needs in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. In this position, she developed alternate assessments and standards for programs for

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students with significant needs; provided support to schools about instructional practices for students with significant needs; and provided behavioral support to school-based personnel. In addition, she has 10 years' experience teaching students with significant disabilities (profoundly mentally handicapped, physically impaired, or autistic). Ms. Orlando has a M.Ed. degree from Lesley College in the area of severe special needs and a B.S. degree in communication disorders and has taken graduate courses in education leadership from Florida Atlantic University and in instructional leadership from Florida International University (where she is pursuing a doctoral degree.) She has been recognized nationally by the Council for Exceptional Children for her work in the area of inclusive practices.

Jane Rhyne

Jane Rhyne is the Assistant Superintendent of Programs for Exceptional Children for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. In this role, she provides leadership for program planning and implementation, professional development, curriculum and instruction, and compliance in special education. Dr. Rhyne is also a Regional Superintendent, supervising and supporting principals in district schools. From 1993-2001, Dr. Rhyne was the coordinating director for Programs for Exceptional Children in the district. In that capacity, she coordinated districtwide program for students with disabilities between the ages of three and 21 and provided expertise and leadership in program planning and implementation, professional development, curriculum and instruction, and special education compliance. From 1991-1993, Dr. Rhyne was the principal of Metro School in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The school enrolls approximately 300 students with significant cognitive disabilities and has a staff of more than 100. From 1973-1978, Dr. Rhyne was a program specialist with the Fairfax County (Va.) Public Schools, where she administered and supervised the district's program for visually impaired students. Her responsibilities included preparation and management of program budget, development and evaluation of program components, supervision of special teaching and support staff, and in-service training of both special and general educators. Prior to this position, Dr. Rhyne was a special education teacher for the Fairfax County Public Schools. Dr. Rhyne has participated in numerous special education reviews conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools over the last five years. Her expertise in multigrade-level inclusion practices, comprehensive reading initiatives, math programs and her experience with Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) are also extensive. Dr. Rhyne received her Ph.D. degree from the University of Virginia in special education with a minor in early childhood education: administration/supervision and research. She also holds also a M.Ed. degree from the University of Virginia in special education and a B.A. degree from Purdue University.

Arnold Viramontes

Arnold Viramontes brings more than 28 years of technical and operational experience to the Dallas Independent School District. He currently is the Chief Transformation Officer responsible for implementing the Dallas Achieves Initiative; restructuring the district's organization; aligning the central services; defining market dynamics; implementing the district's performance management and accountability systems; setting up the performance-pay initiative; establishing the community and parent engagement initiatives; and overseeing organization management. Mr. Viramontes also advises district staff on technology. Before joining the Dallas schools, Mr. Viramontes was the CEO of the Viramontes Group, Inc. (VGI), a technology and

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corporate consulting company founded in 1972 and serving clients in the U.S., Mexico, and South America. Prior to founding VGI, Mr. Viramontes was the initial Executive Director of the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIF), an agency created by the Texas Public Utility Regulatory Act of 1995. In this capacity, he managed the nation's largest program for investing in telecommunications infrastructure for Internet access and videoconferencing. TIF was charged with disbursing up to \$1.5 billion over a 10-year period to be used to link Texas schools, libraries, higher education institutions, and not-for-profit health care facilities to an advanced telecommunications infrastructure. While serving in this role, Mr. Viramontes was appointed Vice-Chair of the Educational Technology Coordinating Council (ETCC), a Texas Legislative initiative to build a statewide strategic plan for technology. Mr. Viramontes was also featured as one of the top 25 most powerful Texans in high technology by *Texas Monthly Biz*. The others singled out included Michael Dell, Chairman and CEO of Dell Computer, and Ed Whitacre, Jr., Chairman and CEO of SBC Communications. Mr. Viramontes was also appointed a senior research fellow to the IC² Institute at the University of Texas, an organization whose mission is to foster technology, entrepreneurship, and education. He was an active member in the Association for Community Networks, the Texas Association of State Systems for Computing and Communications, and the Small State Agency Task Force. Prior to his tenure as Executive Director of the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board, Mr. Viramontes served as the Executive Director of Technology and Information Systems for the Ysleta Independent School District (ISD) in El Paso, Texas. He directed the installation of the instructional and administrative telecommunications system for the 56 schools in the Ysleta ISD, which serves more than 47,000 students.

Michael Casserly

Michael Casserly has served as Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools since January 1992. Dr. Casserly also served as the organization's Director of Legislation and Research for 15 years before assuming his current position. As head of the urban school group, Casserly unified big city schools nationwide around a vision of reform and improvement; launched an aggressive research program on trends in urban education; convened the first Education Summit of Big City Mayors and Superintendents; led the nation's largest urban school districts to volunteer for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); led the first national study of common practices among the nation's fastest improving urban school districts; and launched national task forces on achievement gaps, leadership and governance, finance, professional development, and bilingual education. He is currently spearheading efforts to boost academic performance in the nation's big-city schools; strengthen the management and operations of big-city school districts; challenge inequitable state financing systems; and improve the public's image of urban education. He is a U.S. Army veteran, and holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Maryland and B.A. degree from Villanova University.

Ricki Price-Baugh

Ricki Price-Baugh is the Director of Academic Achievement for the Council of the Great City Schools, where she provides urban school districts with high-leverage technical assistance and applied research. Prior to joining the Council, she served as the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructional Development for the Houston Independent School District, where she led development and implementation of the prekindergarten through grade-12 curriculum,

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professional development of administrators and teachers, and the alternative teacher certification program. She taught at the secondary school level for 13 years and has taught curriculum theory and practice for aspiring principals as adjunct professor with the University of Houston. She received her B.A. degree from Tulane University, her M.A. degree from the University of Maryland, and her Doctorate in Educational Administration from Baylor University.

Julie Wright Halbert, Esq.

Ms. Halbert has served as Legislative Counsel for the Council of the Great City Schools for more than 12 years. As a national education legal and policy specialist, with emphasis on special education, she worked extensively on the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 and 2004. Ms. Halbert is responsible for drafting numerous technical provisions in the IDEA and providing technical assistance to Congress and the United States Department of Education. In 1997 and, again, in July 2005, she testified before the U.S. Department of Education on its proposed regulations on IDEA 2004. Ms. Halbert has directed each of the Council's special education review teams, including special education reviews in the District of Columbia, Guilford County (N.C.), Richmond (Va.), St. Louis, and Charleston (S.C.), as well as in New York City. Ms. Halbert was the counsel of record for the Council of the Great City Schools' *amicus* briefs in the Supreme Court of the United States in (a) *Board of Education of the City School District of the City of New York v. Tom F., On Behalf of Gilbert F., A Minor Child* (2007); (b) *Jacob Winkelman, a Minor By and Through His Parents and Legal Guardians, Jeff and Sander Winkelman, et al. v. Parma City School District* (2007); (c) *Brian Schaffer v. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, et.al.*, (2005); and (d) *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District and Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education* (2007). Ms. Halbert graduated with honors from the University of Maryland and the University of Miami School of Law. She is admitted to practice in the Federal Bar, the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, the Florida and Pennsylvania Bars.

Appendix F. About the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 66 of the nation’s largest urban public school systems. Its Board of Directors is composed of the Superintendent of Schools or Chancellor and one School Board member from each member city, including New York City—one of the Council’s founding members.⁴⁸ An Executive Committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between Superintendents and School Board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in its improvement and reform. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group also convenes two major conferences each year; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities in areas such as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, research, and technology. Finally, the organization informs the nation’s policymakers, the media, and the public of the successes and challenges of schools in the nation’s Great Cities. And urban school leaders from across the country use the organization as an umbrella for their joint activities and concerns. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, and has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

⁴⁸ Albuquerque, Anchorage, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Birmingham, Boston, Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale), Buffalo, Caddo Parish (Shreveport), Charleston County, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Christina (Delaware), Cincinnati, Clark County (Las Vegas), Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Duval County (Jacksonville), East Baton Rouge, Fort Worth, Fresno, Guilford County (Greensboro, N.C.), Hillsborough County (Tampa), Houston, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson County (Louisville), Kansas City, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Nashville, Newark, New Orleans, New York City, Norfolk, Oakland, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Orange County (Orlando), Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, Providence, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, St. Paul, Toledo, Tucson, Washington, D.C., and Wichita

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History of Strategic Support Teams Conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools

| City | Area | Year |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Albuquerque | Facilities and Roofing | 2003 |
| | Human Resources | 2003 |
| | Information Technology | 2003 |
| | Special Education | 2005 |
| | Legal Services | 2005 |
| | Safety and Security | 2007 |
| | Anchorage | Finance |
| Birmingham | Organizational Structure | 2007 |
| | Information Technology | 2000 |
| Buffalo | Superintendent Support | 2000 |
| | Organizational Structure | 2000 |
| Buffalo | Curriculum and Instruction | 2000 |
| | Personnel | 2000 |
| Buffalo | Facilities and Operations | 2000 |
| | Communications | 2000 |
| Buffalo | Finance | 2000 |
| | Finance II | 2003 |
| Caddo Parish (LA) | Facilities | 2004 |
| | Special Education | 2005 |
| Charlotte-Mecklenburg | Human Resources | 2007 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2004 |
| Christina (DE) | Curriculum and Instruction | 2007 |
| | Student Assignments | 1999, 2000 |
| Cleveland | Transportation | 2000 |
| | Safety and Security | 2000 |
| | Facilities Financing | 2000 |
| | Facilities Operations | 2000 |
| | Transportation | 2004 |

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| | | |
|------------|----------------------------|------|
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2005 |
| | Safety and Security | 2007 |
| Columbus | | |
| | Superintendent Support | 2001 |
| | Human Resources | 2001 |
| | Facilities Financing | 2002 |
| | Finance and Treasury | 2003 |
| | Budget | 2003 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2005 |
| | Information Technology | 2007 |
| | Food Services | 2007 |
| Dallas | | |
| | Procurement | 2007 |
| Dayton | | |
| | Superintendent Support | 2001 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2001 |
| | Finance | 2001 |
| | Communications | 2002 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2005 |
| | Budget | 2005 |
| Denver | | |
| | Superintendent Support | 2001 |
| | Personnel | 2001 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2005 |
| | Bilingual Education | 2006 |
| Des Moines | | |
| | Budget and Finance | 2003 |
| Detroit | | |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2002 |
| | Assessment | 2002 |
| | Communications | 2002 |
| | Curriculum and Assessment | 2003 |
| | Communications | 2003 |
| | Textbook Procurement | 2004 |
| | Food Services | 2007 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2008 |
| | Facilities | 2008 |
| | Finance and Budget | 2008 |
| Greensboro | | |
| | Bilingual Education | 2002 |
| | Information Technology | 2003 |
| | Special Education | 2003 |
| | Facilities | 2004 |

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| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------|
| | Human Resources | 2007 |
| Hillsborough County (FLA) | | |
| | Transportation | 2005 |
| | Procurement | 2005 |
| Indianapolis | | |
| | Transportation | 2007 |
| Jackson (MS) | | |
| | Bond Referendum | 2006 |
| Jacksonville | | |
| | Organization and Management | 2002 |
| | Operations | 2002 |
| | Human Resources | 2002 |
| | Finance | 2002 |
| | Information Technology | 2002 |
| | Finance | 2006 |
| Kansas City | | |
| | Human Resources | 2005 |
| | Information Technology | 2005 |
| | Finance | 2005 |
| | Operations | 2005 |
| | Purchasing | 2006 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2006 |
| | Program Implementation | 2007 |
| Los Angeles | | |
| | Budget and Finance | 2002 |
| | Organizational Structure | 2005 |
| | Finance | 2005 |
| | Information Technology | 2005 |
| | Human Resources | 2005 |
| | Business Services | 2005 |
| Louisville | | |
| | Management Information | 2005 |
| Memphis | | |
| | Information Technology | 2007 |
| Miami-Dade County | | |
| | Construction Management | 2003 |
| Milwaukee | | |
| | Research and Testing | 1999 |
| | Safety and Security | 2000 |
| | School Board Support | 1999 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2006 |
| | Alternative Education | 2007 |
| Minneapolis | | |

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| | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------|
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2004 |
| | Finance | 2004 |
| | Federal Programs | 2004 |
| Newark | | |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2007 |
| New Orleans | | |
| | Personnel | 2001 |
| | Transportation | 2002 |
| | Information Technology | 2003 |
| | Hurricane Damage Assessment | 2005 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2006 |
| New York City | | |
| | Special Education | 2008 |
| Norfolk | | |
| | Testing and Assessment | 2003 |
| Philadelphia | | |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2003 |
| | Federal Programs | 2003 |
| | Food Service | 2003 |
| | Facilities | 2003 |
| | Transportation | 2003 |
| | Human Resources | 2004 |
| Pittsburgh | | |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2005 |
| | Technology | 2006 |
| | Finance | 2006 |
| Providence | | |
| | Business Operations | 2001 |
| | MIS and Technology | 2001 |
| | Personnel | 2001 |
| | Human Resources | 2007 |
| Richmond | | |
| | Transportation | 2003 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2003 |
| | Federal Programs | 2003 |
| | Special Education | 2003 |
| Rochester | | |
| | Finance and Technology | 2003 |
| | Transportation | 2004 |
| | Food Services | 2004 |
| San Diego | | |
| | Finance | 2006 |
| | Food Service | 2006 |

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| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|------|
| | Transportation | 2007 |
| | Procurement | 2007 |
| San Francisco | | |
| | Technology | 2001 |
| St. Louis | | |
| | Special Education | 2003 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2004 |
| | Federal Programs | 2004 |
| | Textbook Procurement | 2004 |
| | Human Resources | 2005 |
| Seattle | | |
| | Human Resources | 2008 |
| | Budget and Finance | 2008 |
| | Bilingual Education | 2008 |
| Toledo | | |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2005 |
| Washington, D.C. | | |
| | Finance and Procurement | 1998 |
| | Personnel | 1998 |
| | Communications | 1998 |
| | Transportation | 1998 |
| | Facilities Management | 1998 |
| | Special Education | 1998 |
| | Legal and General Counsel | 1998 |
| | MIS and Technology | 1998 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2003 |
| | Budget and Finance | 2005 |
| | Transportation | 2005 |
| | Curriculum and Instruction | 2007 |