
Discussion Paper: Can we hope to see the next Richard Branson, David Boies, Whoopi Goldberg, Charles Schwab, Steven Spielberg, and Wendy Wasserstein in New York City's Top Public High Schools?

April 2016 Update

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In 2013, I began working on a Discussion Paper concerning how students with IEP's fare at top ranked NYC-DOE high schools. The end result was [*"A Question for Discussion- Can we hope to see the next Richard Branson, David Boies, Whoopi Goldberg, Charles Schwab, Steven Spielberg, and Wendy Wasserstein in New York City's Top Public High Schools?"*](#). The Discussion Paper showed that new significant and positive changes, between school years 2011-12 and 2013-14, took place at the top 25 DOE high schools regarding students with an IEP. The Discussion Paper received coverage in [Chalkbeat NY](#) in November 2014 and the story was picked up by other media outlets.

The April 2016 Update shows here that this trend has continued in a strong upward direction between 2014 and 2016. There are now 1,059 students with IEP's attending top ranked NYC-DOE 25 high schools group. Nine of these schools now have an overall enrollment with at least 8% students with an IEP. Most importantly, a parent no



longer has to worry that the school will lack an appropriate learning environment for their child. Many high schools now have enough students with an IEP for an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom (also known as Collaborative Team Teaching or Inclusion). In fact, 10 high schools now offer students ICT classes in all four main subjects: ELA, math, science and social studies. While much progress has been made by many of the schools in the top ranked 25 group, the update also shows there is still much room for further improvement.

New Findings

- **Over a four year period, 2012 to 2016, students with IEPs increased by 92% at top ranked NYC-DOE high schools:** For school year 2015-16, a total of 1,059 IEP students were attending the top ranked 25 high schools. This is a very big increase from 550 IEP students in 2011-12. The second chart shows that the progress remains uneven with some schools showing serious progress and others none. **See Chart 1 and Chart 2 on pages four and five.**

- **10 of the Top Ranked Schools now have ICT classes for at least 60% of the school day:**

“The NYC-DOE Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms include students with and without disabilities and have two teachers, a general education teacher and a special education teacher. The teachers work together throughout the day to adapt and modify instruction for your child and make sure the entire class has access to the general education curriculum (source: NYC-DOE).”

The big increase in students receiving instruction in Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms is the most important change documented in this report. The number of students receiving at least 60% of the school day in ICT increases from to 152 students in 2012 to 464 students in 2015. The reason is because just for a school to admit IEP students will not mean much unless the school offers an academic setting where the student can thrive and reach their potential. For parents that believe the ICT model is best for their children, they need useful information on how much ICT is available at a school. In the Chart III below, students attending ICT classes in four core subjects in a seven period day are included here (four core subjects are math, English, science and social studies). ICT classes also mean less stigma for a student with an IEP. The other service, known as Special Education Teacher Support Services or SETSS, is usually a pull out model. For parents of general education students, an ICT classroom means their child will be benefitting from the knowledge and attention of two teachers not one. Since typical classroom size is around 25 to 30 students, this increase in teacher involvement is significant. **see Chart 3 on page six below.**

- **In nine of the top ranked high schools group, students with an IEP are now at least 8% of total enrollment.** Here is another significant change that occurred in only two years. In 2014, only two schools (Lab School and Leon Goldstein) in the group of top ranked schools had at least 8% of total enrollment students with an IEP, now there are nine. Students with an IEP and their parents will feel much more comfortable with school selection if they know their child will not be just one of a few. Once a school has a group of students in each grade with an IEP, parents can help ensure that legally required supports are in place by advocating through available mechanisms such as the School Leadership Team (SLT).
- **The pool of potential students with an IEP is still much larger than the number of students enrolled:** The New York State ELA and Math test score admissions requirement for the Top Ranked screened schools is a 3 or 4. There are 17 schools in the top ranked group and another

25 NYC-DOE screened schools where the average incoming Math and ELA test score is at least 3.0. According to the NYC-DOE Demographic Snapshot for 2016, a total of 962 seventh graders with an IEP scored a Level 3 or 4 on the Math exam and 753 seventh graders with an IEP scored a Level 3 or 4 on the ELA exam. While grades and attendance are also factors, it's fair to say that these numbers show that more improvement can still take place. High School means four years. So, the potential number is somewhere between 3,000 and 3,500. The current figure is 1,059.

- **Some schools are still lagging behind:** Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music, Art and Performing Arts (LaGuardia) still lags far behind with only 2.1% of its students with an IEP. It made no progress between 2014 and 2016. LaGuardia is based on performance in an art along with similar grades and test scores as the other screened schools in this group. There is a two step process for admissions to La Guardia HS. First there is a talent based audition. If the student passes the LaGuardia talent audition, then they must meet the following academic criteria:

- English: (80-100), Math: (80-100), Social Studies: (80-100), Science: (80-100)
- Standardized Test Scores: Math Level(s): 2-4; English Language Arts Level(s): 2-4
- Review of Attendance & Punctuality
- Writing Sample

10 of the schools in the top Ranked group (including two schools that are also devoted to the performing arts) have figured out how to offer students with an IEP an academically supportive environment where they can thrive. Given the large number of people in the arts with dyslexia, including many famous actors, it's hard to understand these figures. There are two other schools devoted to the performing arts that have managed to significantly increase the number of students with an IEP: Frank Sinatra and Professional Performing Arts School. This finding leads to a question that deserves further inquiry: why have these two schools been able to while LaGuardia has not. If LaGuardia was also at 8% with its very large enrollment, this would translate into another 200 students with IEP's at a top ranked high school. It would also move New York City much closer to the goal of ensuring that students with learning differences have an opportunities to thrive in the performing arts.

- **What about quality of services for students with an IEP?** Another important issue parents is the quality of high school services for students with an IEP. In addition to talking to other parents and visiting the [Inside schools](#) website, there are other places parents can go to for valuable information. One place to look is a School's **Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP)**. Every school in New York State is required to develop an annual Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). Some CEP's are thoughtful documents while others are just school officials doing the bare minimum to comply with a mandated requirement. Under the leadership of the School Leadership Team (SLT), the CEP can be an opportunity to direct resources to where the needs are greatest (and as intended under the Chancellors regulations). For the top ranked 25 high schools group, the successful integration of students with an IEP should definitely be considered as a top of the list need for the development of

the CEP. Any parent that wants to “look under the hood” of a school, they should skim the schools’ CEP. Here is one example of how a high school has fully embraced the goal of providing quality education to students with an IEP. Below are excerpts from the 2015-16 CEP and 2014-15 CEP for the [Professional Performing Arts High School](#):

- 100% of parents are very satisfied or satisfied with school’s IEP development
- 100% of parents strongly agree or agree that the school works to achieve goals on the IEP
- Research-based and CCLS aligned materials such as books about key instructional focus: assessment, differentiation, universal design, supporting students with learning disabilities and integrated collaborative teaching
- To arrive at deep knowledge of our students’ abilities that will inform differentiated, accessible teaching strategies to all students including students with specific learning differences.
- Special education: The school has two special education teachers. Only 25 students have IEPs, but nearly 100 take advantage of tutoring and extra help offered by community volunteers, peer tutors and the special education teachers.

Charts I, II and III are on the next three pages.

Chart I

Change in Enrollment 2012 to 2016 for Students with an IEP

	Total Student Enrollment	Students with an IEP Feb-12	Students with an IEP Feb-14	Students with an IEP Feb-16*	4 Year Change 2012-2016
Baccalaureate School for Global Education	316	0	3	3	3
Bard High School Early College	535	6	4	5	-1
Bard High School Early College II	600	1	4	7	6
Baruch College Campus High School	445	9	25	61	52
Beacon High School	1306	49	65	104	55
Bronx Science	3010	20	43	33	13
Brooklyn Latin School	664	6	12	15	9
Brooklyn Technical High School	5534	36	62	86	50
Columbia Secondary School	372	8	7	11	3
Eleanor Roosevelt	554	7	17	45	38
Fiorello H. LaGuardia HS of Music and Art	2713	30	56	57	27
FRANK SINATRA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS	828	17	39	82	65
High School for Math Science and Engineering at City College	475	5	14	19	14
High School of American Studies at Lehman College	369	9	9	13	4
Hunter Science High School	443	17	29	52	35
Leon Goldstein High School	1047	83	131	146	63
Medgar Evers College Preparatory School	974	28	37	48	20
Millennium Manhattan High School	641	58	56	64	6
NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies	527	94	92	86	-8
PROFESSIONAL PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL	443	30	37	62	32
Queens Science High School at York College	434	4	0	0	-4
Scholars' Academy	510	0	8	10	10
Staten Island Technical High School	1279	9	14	14	5
Stuyvesant High School	3327	21	24	18	-3
Townsend Harris High School	1133	3	6	18	15
Total	28479	550	794	1059	509

Source and notes: all data comes from the NYC-DOE Demographic Snapshots February 2016. There are five schools here that combine middle and high school: Columbia Secondary School, Scholars Academy, Medgar Evers, Professional Performing Arts and Baccalaureate School for Global Education). For this group of five schools, the NYC-DOE 2014-15 High School *School Quality Guide* was used since the *School Quality Guide* offers a separate middle school and high school version (and the Demographic Snapshots combine the middle and high school students figures). This is the only data available that breaks down the student data by middle and high school instead of showing it as one seven year program.

Chart II: Ranking of High Schools by % of Students with an IEP

	Total School Enrollment 2015-16	Students with an IEP 2015-16*	% of Total Enrollment
NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies	527	86	16.3
PROFESSIONAL PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL	443	62	14
Leon Goldstein High School	1047	146	13.9
Baruch College Campus High School	445	61	13.7
Manhattan Hunter Science High School	443	52	11.7
Millennium Manhattan High School	641	64	10
FRANK SINATRA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS	828	82	9.9
Eleanor Roosevelt	554	45	8.1
Beacon High School	1306	104	8
Medgar Evers College Preparatory School	974	48	4.9
High School for Math Science and Engineering at City College	475	19	4
High School of American Studies at Lehman College	369	13	3.5
Columbia Secondary School	372	11	2.9
Brooklyn Latin School	664	15	2.3
Fiorello H. LaGuardia HS of Music and Art	2713	57	2.1
Scholars' Academy	510	10	2
Brooklyn Technical High School	5534	86	1.6
Townsend Harris High School	1133	18	1.6
Bard High School Early College II	600	7	1.2
Bronx Science	3010	33	1.1
Staten Island Technical High School	1279	14	1.1
Baccalaureate School for Global Education	316	3	1
Bard High School Early College	535	5	0.9
Stuyvesant	3327	18	0.5
Queens Science High School at York College	434	0	0
Total	28479	1059	3.7%

Source and notes: all data comes from the NYC-DOE Demographic Snapshots February 2016. There are five schools here that combine middle and high school: Columbia Secondary School, Scholars Academy, Medgar Evers, Professional Performing Arts and Baccalaureate School for Global Education). For this group of five schools, the NYC-DOE 2014-15 High School *School Quality Guide* was used since the *School Quality Guide* offers a separate middle school and high school version (and the Demographic Snapshots combine the middle and high school students figures. This is the only data available that breaks down the student data by middle and high school instead of showing it as one seven year program.

CHART III: Schools with IEP Students Attending 60% or more in ICT Classes

A major change in special education that has taken place over past 25 years is the change from self-contained classes to inclusion classrooms. The inclusion classroom or Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) as it is called in NYC-DOE schools typically involves two teachers in the classroom teaching the same subject. One teacher has a general education background and the other teacher has a special ed background and license. An ICT classroom by law cannot have more than 40% of the students with an IEP. For parents that believe the ICT model is best for their child, they need useful information on how much ICT is available at a school. In the chart below, students are attending ICT classes in the "four core subjects in a seven period day are included here" (four core subjects typically include math, English, science and social studies). For parents of general ed students, an ICT classroom means their child will be benefitting from the knowledge and attention of two teachers not one. The chart below shows the changes over the four year period for schools offering ICT classrooms for 60% or more of school time.

High School	Students with an IEP 2015-16	Students with 60% or more in ICT Classes 2011-12	Students with 60% or more in ICT Classes 2015-16
Leon Goldstein High School	146	35	77
Beacon High School	104	14	62
NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies	86	73	58
Brooklyn Technical High School	86	0	6
FRANK SINATRA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS	82	0	55
Millennium Manhattan High School	64	29	26
PROFESSIONAL PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL	62	0	56
Baruch College Campus High School	61	0	55
Fiorello H. LaGuardia HS of Music and Art	57	0	0
Manhattan/Hunter Science High School	52	0	33
Medgar Evers College Preparatory School	48	1	14
Eleanor Roosevelt	45	0	19
Bronx Science	33	0	0
High School for Math Science and Engineering at City College	19	0	0
Townsend Harris High School	18	0	0
Stuyvesant	18	0	0
Brooklyn Latin School	15	0	0
Staten Island Technical High School	14	0	0
High School of American Studies at Lehman College	13	0	0
Columbia Secondary School	11	0	4
Scholars' Academy	10	0	5
Bard High School Early College II	7	0	0
Bard High School Early College	5	0	0
Baccalaureate School for Global Education	3	0	0
Queens Science High School at York College	0	0	0
Total	1059	152	464

Source: ICT data comes from NYC DOE Fair Student Funding FY 2013, FY 2015 and Register April 2, 2016.

Sample of NYC-DOE Fair Student Funding

This section has been prepared for parents that want to see the actual budgetary commitment to providing services for students with an IEP. A high school can say on their website that they offer SETSS, ICT or both. However, the actual size of the offering can vary considerably. The only way for a parent to see if there will be ICT classes for the main subjects is to go to a school’s Fair Student Funding breakdown webpage. Below are two cut and paste pieces of information from the NYC-DOE.

The table below provides a summary of the types of services that map to each category of special education funding

FSF Category	Examples of Services
Less than or equal to 20%	Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) or any single period per day of Self-contained or Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)
Between 21% and 59%	Multiple SETSS, or multiple periods per day of Self-contained or Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)
Greater than or equal to 60% Self-contained	Self-contained students including 12:1, 12:1:1 and 15:1
Greater than or equal to 60% Integrated	ICT

Source: NYC-DOE Fair Student Funding & School Budget Resource Guide FY 2013

High School Sample

Fair Student Funding for Special Education Services

Manhattan Millennium High School

		FY 2016 Per Capita without Funding for System-wide Teacher Salary Change ⁴	FY 2015 Registers	FY 2016 Projected Register	FY 2016 Projected Formula	Register Change	Formula
	Special Education Services		132	151	\$939,364	19	\$164,657
i	Special Education < 60%						
a	<= 20%	\$2,308.88	17	16	\$36,942	(1)	(\$2,309)
b	21% to 59%	\$5,155.58	42	28	\$144,356	(14)	(\$72,178)
ii	Special Education >= 60% Contained						
b	9-12 Filled Seats	\$2,407.91	1	2	\$4,816	1	\$2,408
ii	Special Education >= 60% Integrated ⁶						
a	K Filled Seats	\$8,608.78	0	0	\$0	0	\$0
b	1-5 Filled Seats	\$7,173.81	0	0	\$0	0	\$0
c	6-8 Filled Seats	\$7,173.81	0	0	\$0	0	\$0
d	9-12 Filled Seats	\$7,173.81	72	105	\$753,250	33	\$236,736

Source: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/funding/schoolbudgets/FY16FairStudentFundingBudget.htm?schoolcode=K535>

Sources and Notes:

1. **All data comes from the New York City Department of Education.** The special education high school enrollment student data for school years 2011-12, 2013-14 and 2015-16 comes from the [Demographic Snapshot file](#). The 2014 Discussion Paper used two NYC-DOE sources for data: the 2012 figures were taken from the Special Education Service Delivery Report and the 2014 figures were taken from the official school Register June 2014. ICT data comes from NYC DOE Fair Student Funding FY 2013, FY 2015 and Register April 2, 2016.
2. **How the top high schools were selected.** NYC-DOE's own peer ranking system for school year 2011-12 was used to select the schools. To maintain consistency between 2012 and 2016, the same high schools were grouped together. Also, to ensure consistency of data, there is a group of top schools that are not included here because these schools operate with a hybrid model of zoned students and screened students. This group includes Midwood High School in Brooklyn, Francis Lewis, and Cardozo High Schools in Queens. Each of these schools has a very large neighborhood zoned student population; these students are admitted based on their residence. These schools also operate honors programs in which admission is highly competitive. To be accepted into one of these programs, students must have high test scores (3 or 4) and grades (90 or above). Each of these schools also serves a large number of students with an IEP. However, it is impossible to know of the IEP group, how many of these students are in the selective programs and how many in the zoned school. The data is not available. Two other schools that are highly ranked, NEST and Queens Gateway, were not included because the official DOE data includes both their middle and high schools. There are 25 other top ranked screened schools (based on average incoming ELA Test Score of 3.0 or higher) that should also be included in this spotlight on changes in the enrollment of students with an IEP. Many of these schools offer ICT classes. For a more in depth discussion of NYC-DOE screened high schools, see [*Equity Discussion Paper: Should the New York City Department of Education Increase the Number of Screened High Schools for Outer-Borough Academically Strong Students*](#). The Peer Group ranking for any NYC-DOE school can be found in the School Quality Guide which is available on the school's NYC-DOE website.
3. The author thanks Nira Kaplan, Ph.D., for reviewing the 2016 Update and providing comments.