



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Senator Addabbo Suggests Improvements Better Alternative Than Eliminating Gifted and Talented Program

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. October 8, 2021

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, EDUCATION COMMITTEE, GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS, NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, ADDABBO**

NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., a member of the Senate Education Committee, is speaking out against Mayor de Blasio's decision to phase out NYC's Gifted and Talented program in the final months of his term, suggesting improvements should be made instead to make the program more accessible to all children, including better outreach into all communities.

"Mayor de Blasio's decision to phase out the Gifted and Talented program instead of making it more inclusive with improved resources, is shortsighted and inappropriate, especially as his term ends in a couple of months," said Addabbo. "I believe the Gifted and Talented program should be improved to make it more accessible to all children, provide better outreach into all communities and to ensure every student has fair access to preparatory classes and tutors. At this point any decisions should be left up to the next mayoral administration, with extensive input from citywide communities, especially from concerned parents, to determine what is appropriate for the future of our school children."

Senator Addabbo currently sponsors legislation (**S.3445A/A.4083A**) to expand and improve gifted and talented programs. This legislation would create more Advanced and G&T

programs and classes, creating a pathway for top students to develop throughout their time in elementary and intermediate schools. Further, this bill would allow students to be admitted to Advanced classes at the elementary school level via academic merit, rather than an admissions examination giving some gifted children, who may not perform well in a test setting, an avenue for admission to these programs. Passage of this bill will give children in the city of New York a leg up and improve the educational quality of our schools at a time when many are calling for a decrease in standards rather than an increase in resources for our children.

While NYC schools are filled with some of the brightest children in the country, too often the schools they attend do not have the proper programs to challenge them and develop their cognitive skills. Gifted & Talented (G&T) programs are one way that NYC supports the educational needs of exceptional students. While some schools currently have G&T Programs, not all do, often a disadvantage to the students who need these classes the most. Accelerated learning (AL) programs provide children the opportunity to learn at their pace and encourage students to challenge themselves amongst their peers so they can reach their full potential. Mayoral candidate Eric Adams supports building up existing accelerated learning programs and instituting new programs throughout the City.

The Senator is aiming to give every child the resources needed to access and improve the Gifted and Talented program, in an effort to excel educationally at their own pace and ability.

“I understand the desire to increase diversity in our Gifted and Talented programs, but getting rid of the program and exchanging it with a replacement program that is dumped on us with minimal parent input isn’t the answer,” Addabbo added. “With such a small fraction of students in the gifted and talented program, and the amount of controversy generated by talks of eliminating it, it’s apparent the real need should be to focus on fixing the system for

everybody. By working together with the community, teachers, parents and students under a new administration, I believe we can reform the Gifted and Talented program to better serve all of our talented students.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2021-S3445A

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- Introduced
  
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  
- Delivered to Governor
  
- Signed By Governor
  
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Requires the New York city department of education to create more gifted and talented programs and classes

January 29, 2021

In Senate Committee **Education**

Sponsored by **Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.**

Do you support this bill?