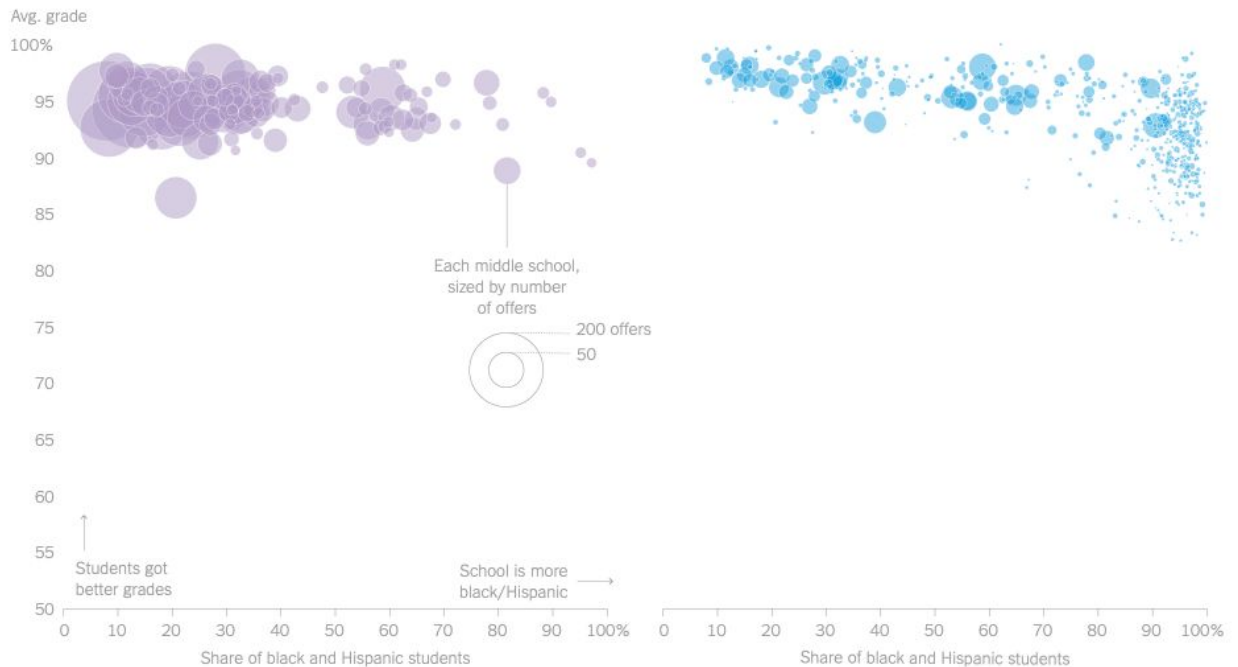


SHSAT II: A Fatal Plan

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Caption: From the NYT. The average grades of students under de Blasio's plan remain high (compared to the SHSAT), but become much more scattered as the concentration of black and hispanic students increase.

This article is Part II of a 3-part series that considers the success of measures taken to curb the overflowing population of asians in specialized high schools.

Here's a riddle: How can a meritocratic system foster inequity? The answer has plagued New York's greatest high schools for the better part of a decade. Over the last decade, the black and hispanic population has declined to the point that only 3.6% of the 5,067 admissions were offered to black students in 2018.

The Solution? Take the top 7% of every middle school, and reserve a fifth of the seats for discovery program students, according to [Mayor De Blasio](#). According to [a study conducted by NYU Steinhardt](#), the 7% plan most drastically changes the admissions landscape, increasing the percent of black and hispanic students accepted from 10% to 45% (according to the [New York Times](#)). But the plan arises many questions. Is it sacrificing talent for diversity? Does it hinder asians' ability to enter specialized high schools? The answers remain disputed. [A study by the](#)

[Community Serve Society](#) claims the 7% plan ensures the academic rigor of Specialized High Schools remain unaffected, but NYU Steinhardt's study claims the lack of a citywide restriction (ie top 10% GPA citywide) would result in lower academic standards for the Specialized High schools.

In all the frenzy, we've left the biggest player unexamined: The Feeders. The feeders are the middle schools that contribute most to specialized high school admissions. They're the reason only 5% of NYC's middle schools account for half of the acceptances.

The feeder schools will be drastically affected. Instead of contributing 1274 students, or a quarter of the offers to specialized high schools, they would only account for 5.5%: a reduction of almost a thousand students. The change is most severe in the biggest feeders: middle schools like Christa McAuliffe, Mark Twain, and Booker T Washington, where 186, 166, and 130 offers will be lost, respectively, [according to the New York Times](#). Parents of the biggest feeder school have rebelled, causing the school's parent teacher organization to file a federal lawsuit against De Blasio's plan. Vito LaBella, Christa McAuliffe's Parent Teacher Organization's president believes the plan to be unfair, "It's discriminatory. I do believe our children would no longer be allowed to partake in Discovery".

Well, one thing's for sure: De Blasio's plan of replacing the SHSAT has virtually no traction in the state legislature. Governor Andrew Cuomo, despite refusing to comment on his stance on De Blasio's proposals, staunchly supports the meritocratic system of the SHSAT.

De Blasio's 7% plan has ruptured the city: opponents believe it sacrifices talent for diversity, and denies asian immigrants the right to a meritocratic education system. Proponents believe the fault lives in those the SHSAT accepts, but the many black and hispanic students whose potential it overlooks. And yet in all this frenzy, De Blasio's plan is stuck in terms of actual legislative progress. Alas, the SHSAT has engendered a problem so fatal, the mayor has proposed a plan many view to be a racially charged sleight-of-hand intended to "load blacks and hispanics" (Larry Carry, Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation president) into the specialized high schools.