

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALAS STATEMENT REGARDING EQUITY AND ACCESS IN NYC

The Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents is dedicated to achieving education equity and access for all students; specifically, for the under-served and under-represented. Actions to achieve equity require courageous leadership and passion to confront this ethical imperative when individuals of privilege view equity as personal oppression and create barriers in its attainment. School systems must not remain separate and void of equity. Diversity in quality personnel that mirrors the student demographic, and access to educational programming, should no longer be a scarce commodity for all children throughout our country. ALAS stands with every leader who takes robust actions to remove barriers to access and equity for all children.

Since his appointment as chancellor in April 2018 by Mayor Bill de Blasio, Richard Carranza has been steadily moving towards the overarching imperative of increasing inclusiveness systemwide. Along the way, he has dedicated himself to learning the intricacies of the school system, while listening intently to the thousands of students and families it serves.¹

Taking on the leadership role within New York City's Department of Education with a mandate to increase inclusivity so that access to schools, staff, and resources are equally allocated among all students throughout the massive school system is an ambitious, arduous undertaking, and a task that is long overdue.

The vexing issues being confronted by Carranza in designing a system that distributes resources equitably among student populations also serves as a paradigm of similar debates taking place in school systems across the country. Taking on this challenge will set a significant precedent nationwide. Carranza is confronting decades of entrenched systemic segregation and a status-quo that has little interest in changing a system that is inequitable and significantly inaccessible to many students in New York City Public Schools.

As he carries out this critical work, Carranza remains resolute, and continues to implement long-overdue changes to admissions parameters for the city's high-performance high schools, equity training for staff, and bringing to surface the lack of personnel diversity. Necessary admission parameter reforms are substantiated by a recent Quinnipiac University poll² that showed strong support among New York City voters, with 63 percent in favor of increasing diversity in specialized high schools. Additional momentum has been created through the recent announcement that 62 of the 67 recommendations made in a comprehensive preliminary report from the School Diversity Advisory Group, included embedding diversity and integration metrics into the School Quality Report.³

As Carranza works through the complexities and transformation required to implement the agenda for which he was hired; outcomes for all students, regardless of what invisible map boundary they might fall within, will improve. Leveling the playing field for all New York City students is an ethical imperative which is an issue that resounds across the country. Chancellor Carranza is up for the challenges ahead to affect positive change. He is to be commended for having the courage to step up and take on the incredible challenge in leading the country's largest school system towards equity

in education and accessibility for all New York City students, regardless of zip code, family income, or ethnicity.

Nancy Lewin

Executive Director, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents

The Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) is a non-profit organization providing leadership at the national level that assures every school in America effectively serves the educational needs of all students with an emphasis on Latinx youth by building capacity, promoting best practices, and transforming educational institutions. ALAS is committed to identifying, recruiting, developing and advancing Latinx school administrators in order to improve the educational accomplishments of Latinx youth. Our primary areas of focus are professional development for superintendents, principals, and other administrators, information sharing around innovative instructional and learning strategies, and advocacy for education policy.

¹Moving Toward a More Equitable School System Lessons Learned from My Listening Tour, https://cdn-blob-prd.azureedge.net/prd-pws/docs/default-source/default-document-library/listening-toure2496e16562e4eccaed429fb9cbd0647.pdf?sfvrsn=9d67209d_2

²Quinnipiac University Poll, April 2, 2019 - Congestion Pricing Won't Work, New Yorkers Say, Quinnipiac University Poll Finds; Voters Say Scrap Elite School Test, Increase Diversity
<https://poll.qu.edu/new-york-city/release-detail?ReleaseID=2612>

³Mayor de Blasio, Schools Chancellor Carranza Announce Adoption of School Diversity Advisory Group Recommendations, June 10, 2019
<https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/292-19/mayor-de-blasio-schools-chancellor-carranza-adoption-school-diversity-advisory-group>