

**TESTIMONY OF  
NEW YORK APPLESEED**

**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**December 7, 2017**

Good Afternoon,

My name is Matt Gonzales. I am director of the school diversity project for New York Appleseed, a nonprofit social justice center which advocates for integrated schools and communities. I am also a member of the New York City Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation (ASID) and serve as the Policy Coach for IntegrateNYC.

I am happy to say, New York City has finally taken small steps to disrupt the persistence of educational segregation in our City. And while many in this room (myself included) continue to feel that the steps taken have been largely inadequate, we must acknowledge a change in direction and tone on the issue of segregation. New York Appleseed has long taken the position that local communities must be the drivers and designers of *Integration* initiatives, but this has never meant that City leadership is absolved from responsibility.

As the City undertakes initiatives to promote school diversity, we call on the Mayor and Chancellor to commit to the **5 R's of Real Integration** as defined by IntegrateNYC. To capture the educational benefits of diversity, we must do more than just move bodies. We must move resources; we must move curriculum, pedagogy and school cultures, we must move discipline practices; and we must move our mindsets away from a multi-tiered educational system with winners and losers. Only then will we be able to do the work of uprooting racism and white supremacy from our education system. This effort will require investments by the DOE, but from this body as well.

We call on members of this committee, and the larger City Council to do three things.

1. Join us in educating yourselves, the Mayor, the Chancellor, and the City about the 5 R's of Real Integration.
2. Invest your time and resources into supporting integration initiatives in your districts.
3. Continue to refine and hold the DOE responsible for producing the School Diversity Accountability Report, as was articulated in Local Law No. 59 (see attached memo).

At a moment when the entire country seems to be moving into darkness, New York City has an opportunity to be a beacon of light that will lead this nation towards a better future. Mayor de

Blasio touts himself as a national leader of progressive politics. His approach to this and many others issues during his first time did not rise to that stature, but we are hopeful that the he will use his second term to be bold and decisive.

Thank you.