

## Pro-integration parents reject Upper West Side rezoning proposal

By [Eliza Shapiro](#) Politico

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A group of Upper West Side parents and advocates who say school integration is their top priority have come out against the latest plan to rezone the neighborhood, arguing the proposal won't go far enough to integrate the neighborhood's deeply segregated schools.

The parents' opposition to the plan, laid out in a letter sent to chancellor Carmen Fariña on Friday and obtained by POLITICO New York, upends some of the conventional wisdom about the motivation of parents who are involved in the contentious rezoning debate.

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Previously, the hordes of parents who have mounted protests to the plan have argued that a rezoning would mean sending their children to inferior schools in inconvenient parts of the neighborhood, a position some say helps prove that white parents are resisting much-needed integration.

But now a group of vocal parents who support the integration have also come out against a plan proposed by the local Community Education Council.

"We request that the CEC's plan be rejected in favor of a more comprehensive plan that reviews the entire district and fulfills the CEC's unmet obligation to provide all District 3 parents and community with 'a public forum to air their concerns,'" the letter, signed by a dozen parents, reads. The parents identify with the District 3 Equity in Education Task Force and NYC Parents for Equity and Desegregation.

Their argument is particularly notable considering members of the Council have argued that their plan represents the district's best shot at desegregation in decades. At a recent public meeting on the plan, Council member Daniel Katz justified his support for the plan by saying parents "have an obligation to stop segregation" on the Upper West Side.

But the neighborhood's most vocal pro-integration parents are calling for a broader approach.

"Tacking 'desegregation' onto a small, piecemeal rezoning is a shortsighted approach that avoids confronting the underlying causes and leaves the systemic problem unresolved. It is also unconscionable to conduct 'desegregation' without the participation of low-income communities," the letter reads.

Earlier this week, a group of parents from P.S. 452, a popular and mostly white elementary school that may be re-sited as a result of the rezoning, [released a letter](#) stating their support for the plan. In the letter, they argued that their voices had been drowned out by the extremely vocal set of parents who are opposed to the rezoning.

The Upper West Side's [rezoning debate](#) has become the latest magnet for a citywide discussion on school integration. A recent study found that the city's schools are the most racially and socio-economically segregated in the nation.