



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

Sanders Introduces Legislation Granting Automatic SUNY and CUNY Admission to Students Graduating in Top Ten Percent of Their High School Class

JAMES SANDERS JR. February 19, 2016



State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village) today introduced legislation (S6763) that would grant students graduating in the top ten percent of their high school class automatic admission to all state and city universities, i.e., SUNY and CUNY schools.

To qualify for automatic admission, students would have to graduate high school in New York, with a grade point average in the top ten percent of their class, within one of the two

school years preceding the academic year for which they were applying for an undergraduate program, and submit their application by the college's deadline

The legislation also encourages universities to adopt policies under which students graduating in the top twenty-five percent of their class shall be admitted. Further, it defines factors colleges should consider for admission purposes, including a student's academic record, poverty level, parents' education, school district's financial status and outside responsibilities.

"This will ensure students from diverse backgrounds are adequately represented at our public universities," Sanders stated. "It will encourage students to perform to the best of their abilities with the assurance success in high school will guarantee them a seat in college, no matter where they are from."

The legislation is modeled after the Texas Ten Percent Plan, enacted in that state after it was ruled their admissions system based on racial preferences was unconstitutional. Currently, the Supreme Court is revisiting the issue. While a system using race is subject to strict scrutiny by courts and thus more likely to be invalidated, this approach seeks to promote socioeconomic diversity in a race-neutral manner.