

# New York City Education Budget Demands

*We need equity in this city's education budget.*

*In order to have true education and racial justice in our New York City public schools and for our New York City public school students, we demand that New York City spends the influx of money to our public schools in a truly equitable manner. Over a dozen community organizations and hundreds of parents informed the list of demands listed below. We demand these be prioritized in the New York City budget.*

*The pandemic only highlighted the devastating reality of unequal and inequitable public school conditions. New York City has a critical opportunity to address these disparities and must take action with a budget that addresses these gaps and the needs of our students and families.*

*Mayor de Blasio and the New York City Council have a responsibility to New York City public school students to ensure that they will spend the billions of dollars New York City is getting in ways that are centered in equity and are research based, and uphold our student's rights. In addition, while the city is slated to receive billions of dollars to fund one-time initiatives within the next three years, it is critical for the Mayor and Council to determine how they plan to sustain investments into educational programs when federal funding runs out.*

## Infrastructure & Technologically-Savvy Schools

\$445 million

### **Class size reduction: \$250 million**

We support the City Council's proposal in its preliminary budget response that \$250 million be invested in reducing class size next year, targeted first for struggling schools with especially vulnerable students. This would allow for the hiring of about 2500 new teachers, which could lower class sizes in as many as 10,000 classrooms, as every new teacher lowers the class size of every class in the same grade or subject in a particular school.

### **Infrastructure: \$175 million**

- \$125 million to finance \$3.6 billion in bonds to add 26,550 seats to the capital plan
- \$25 million to lease and if necessary, renovate 17 parochial school buildings
- \$25 million to finance bonds to generate \$700 million for ventilation and other upgrades

### **Grade/Developmentally Appropriate Devices: \$20 million**

We urge the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) to supply keyboards, stylus, chargers, and student support applications for existing iPads. We encourage the purchase of Chromebooks or laptops going forward for all students enrolled in middle or high school. The DOE should also provide tech support in a more localized way instead of how it has been handled centrally. We recommend dispatching tech specialists to the Borough Support Offices to facilitate district-specific support for tech liaisons in the schools, to enable speedier service to lessen the time a student is without a workable device. We also recommend these specialists be bilingual or multilingual to support language access for those families experiencing difficulty setting up the learning devices because instructions are in English.

### **Universal Broadband**

We urge the City of New York to prioritize installation of high-speed broadband infrastructure in public housing; in neighborhoods whose median wealth is below the citywide median wealth; and in low-income communities spatially situated amid higher income communities. We also urge the DOE to renegotiate free internet subscriptions with internet & cellular service providers for the entirety of the school year 2021-2022, including the summer of 2021, regardless of the possibility of full school reopening in Fall 2021.

## Supportive Schools

\$559 million

### **Community Schools: \$72 million**

Beginning in September 2021 New York City Community Schools will be expanding from 266 to 406 schools. We demand that \$72 million is baselined for these additional 140 schools (a fully funded full service community school totals \$450K per school).

- a) Phase 1: This September, 32 new community schools (some of which are located on campuses) in the 27 communities hardest hit by COVID require an additional \$2.195 million to achieve full funding.
- b) Phase 2: Funding must be in place as the remaining 108 schools that will be added by 2025.

### **Fully Fund Meaningful Citywide Restorative Justice: \$225 million**

- Hire school-based Restorative Justice Coordinators in every middle and high school
- Provide ongoing restorative justice training for all school staff
- Require that restorative justice trainings integrate an anti-racist approach
- Develop restorative justice curriculum with teachers and students,
- Enable school-led pass through funding to community partners to support implementation and learning,
- Recognizing that it will take time to scale up to full implementation in all schools, the City should provide \$118.5 million for implementation in 500 high schools this year.

### **Expand Access to Social & Emotional Supports: \$177 million**

- Invest \$162 million in FY22 to hire new social workers and school counselors to continue working towards a ratio of 1:150 for all schools and 1:50 for high needs schools over the next 5 years, and prioritize hiring from Black and Brown communities.
- Invest \$15 million in the Mental Health Continuum to provide direct mental health support for students with significant mental health needs who require an integrated system of targeted, intensive support and services.
- Allocate additional funding for schools to hire community members into supportive positions based on their needs.
- Hire diverse support staff: Increased recruitment for Black, non-white Latinx, and Asian Social workers, counselors and nurses that are multilingual to assess and evaluate young children with disabilities.

### **Eliminate School Policing**

- Disband the School Safety Division
- Eliminate the Youth Coordination Officer position
- Fully divest from metal-detection equipment, and camera-surveillance technology

### **Help Students Reconnect**

Invest \$55 million to hire 500 community coordinators, including 150 shelter-based community coordinators, to engage in intensive strengths-based outreach to ensure that students who are disconnected from school can reengage in school and access support offered outside of school such as summer programming or after-school tutoring.

### **Librarians/Library Media Specialists**

The New York State Education Department ordered the DOE to produce a plan in 2014 toward honoring students' right to library media specialists in all New York City public middle schools and high schools. Accounting for salaries, rising costs, and the current number of vacancies, we estimate it would cost \$30 million to bring all of our schools into compliance with state mandates. (Current estimate extrapolated from costs estimated originally by the Department of Education during a New York City Council Committee on Education hearing (see [pages 73-74](#)).

**District 79 proposal for a state-of-the-art lab in the South Bronx:** The cost to upgrade the library into a lab is approximately \$750,000.

## **Schools with Strong Academic Support**

**\$300 million**

Revamp literacy instruction and provide students with the individualized academic support they need:

### **Evidence-based, culturally responsive reading curricula for core instruction: \$50 million**

- Recommended in the City Council's response to the preliminary budget, so students can receive instruction in foundational literacy skills proven to work to teach students to read.

### **Targeted one-on-one or small-group intervention: \$150 million**

- To be provided to students who need more help learning to read

### **“High-dosage” small group tutoring in a range of subjects: \$100 million**

- Recommended in the City Council’s response to the preliminary budget. Such programming must include specialized support for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students in the juvenile and criminal justice systems and must include bus service or other door-to-door transportation for students who need it to access any tutoring offered outside the regular school day.

## **Culturally Responsive Schools**

\$1 billion

### **Launch intensive 3-year push to develop CRSE skills and expertise: \$350 million**

- Hold summer institutes for the summers of 2021, 2022 and 2023, possibly through a partnership with EduColor, NYU Metro Center or other institutions
- Provide ongoing school-year professional development
- Build new teacher capacity

### **Expand CRSE and Ethnic Studies curricula and book: \$600 million**

- Create new culturally responsive-sustaining curriculum
- Create website through DOE or CREHub.org to host culturally responsive lessons, activities, units etc. and make them publicly accessible to educators
- Fund schools to buy diverse and culturally responsive books for school and classroom libraries

### **Create Office of Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education within the Chancellor’s Office: \$50 million**

- Led by the Senior Advisor for CRSE, who reports directly to the Chancellor
- In charge of overseeing and guiding CRSE plan
- Works with DOE’s research & evaluation arm to monitor and evaluate plan

- Stays in close communication and collaboration with families, youth and community members as an essential asset in building curriculum

## **Healthy and Safe Schools**

\$538 million

- Nurses: Every school should have a permanent, full time registered nurse. Currently the Office of School Health has a policy of hiring contract nurses, which don’t have access to the Automated Student Health record, which is critical in emergency situations. Currently there are over 400 vacancies in the Office of School Health. This includes pay parity for nurses. Estimated cost to hire for existing vacancies would cost \$33 million
- Health training around asthma – the most prevalent healthcare related disability in children
- COVID Testing/Vaccine delivery: \$500 million for testing, tracing and vaccine delivery in schools (does not included “Situation Room salary”)
- Early screening for dyslexia: There are 960 Psychologists in the DOE. Training them all to be able to conduct early screenings for students would cost roughly \$5 million

## **Schools that Provide Specialized Support**

\$1,000,000,178

### **Data Disaggregation: \$500,000**

For proper data collection and disaggregation of students’ ethnic groups to identify and address inequities across ethnic groups.

- Changing internal data collection processes
  - Stakeholder engagement on how best to collect data
  - Collecting data at multiple enrollment points
- Internal rollout and training for staff on new data collection policies and procedures
- Public service announcement series explaining changes in data being requested and why it will benefit families
- Providing physical forms when necessary with new demographic data questions

## Students with Disabilities: \$321 million

\$85 million in FY 22 to address the preschool special education class shortage and provide salary parity to teachers of preschool special education classes at CBOs, as recommended in the City Council's response to the preliminary budget. While we support the \$22 million investment in the Executive Budget to provide more inclusive preschool options in FY 22, there is no new funding to support preschoolers with the most significant disabilities until FY 23 and no commitment to salary parity for preschool special education teachers even in FY 23.

- Sufficient funding for compensatory services so students with disabilities can get the make-up instruction and services to which they are entitled as a result of the pandemic. In order for us to assess the \$236 million investment in the Executive Budget for compensatory and other special education services in FY 22, the DOE must release a public plan explaining how students will receive their compensatory services.
- We demand more NEST and Horizon programs in Black and non-white Latinx and other non- white immigrant neighborhoods
  - Create a free evaluation path to increase participation of BIPOC children in NEST and Horizon programs that reflect their percentages in the New York City public schools
- Conduct outreach in communities around providing universal screenings of children for Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Therapeutic Services using a culturally responsive approach

## Students in Foster Care: \$7.5 million

- \$1.5 million for a small DOE office focused on students in foster care. Currently, the DOE does not have an office, team, or even a single staff member solely dedicated to supporting youth in care
- \$5 million to guarantee bus service or other door-to-door transportation for students in foster care so they can maintain school stability following the disruption of the pandemic.

## English Language Learners and immigrant families: \$350 million (Full 3 year budget here)

1) Urgently develop and implement a plan for catching up

ELLs and students with Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents.

- Develop and offer robust, targeted academic support for ELLs and students from LEP families in schools, including ELLs with disabilities.
- Create and offer ELL summer school and extended day programs for students in K - 12th grade that fully incorporates early childhood students (K-2nd grade) and ELLs with disabilities.
- Identify and publicly announce the scope of investment and metrics of success for this effort. And clearly specify how the DOE and which leaders will own monitoring the impact of a targeted academic support plan for these students and families.

2) Invest \$20 million dollars for at least three years (\$60 million total) for grants to community-based organizations (CBOs) and schools already well-positioned to support ELLs and immigrant families. The following programs should be prioritized:

- Afterschool for ELLs, ELLs with disabilities, and students with LEP families.
- Saturday programs for ELLs, ELLs with disabilities, and students with LEP families.
- Family engagement and community education programs for LEP families.
- In-person support for ELLs, ELLs with disabilities, and LEP families, where feasible.

3) Implement and fully fund the New York Immigration Coalition's [Education Collaborative's Communications Plan](#). Transform DOE communications infrastructure by:

- Avoiding sole reliance on online and email communication.
- Focusing significant resources on forms of communication that are more accessible and easier to understand for LEP families, such as phone calls, letters on paper, videos, and face-to-face interactions, etc.
- Adapting strategies to be inclusive of families who speak Languages of Limited Diffusion and those with low literacy and/or low digital literacy.
- Centrally tracking and monitoring school-based engagement of immigrant families.