



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

Testimony to be Delivered to the New York City Council Committee on Education

Re: Int. 0266-2024 (establishing a bullying prevention task force), Int. 0399-2024 (requiring reporting on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act), Int. 0733-2024 (requiring reporting on Career and Technical Education), and Int. 0771-2024 (requiring distribution of information on interpretation services)

June 18, 2024

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Sarah Part, and I am the Senior Policy Analyst at Advocates for Children of New York (AFC). For more than 50 years, Advocates for Children has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. We speak out for students whose needs are often overlooked, including students with disabilities, students from immigrant families, students with mental health needs, students involved in bullying, and students who are homeless or in foster care.

I am here to testify about four of the bills on today's agenda—Intro. 266, establishing a bullying prevention task force; Intro. 399, requiring reporting on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; Intro. 733, requiring reporting on Career and Technical Education; and Intro. 771, requiring distribution of information on interpretation services.

Int. No. 0266-2024

AFC hears from many families of students who have experienced bullying, harassment, or discrimination at school, and we support Intro. 266, which would require the creation of a bullying prevention task force. To further strengthen Intro. 266, we suggest:

- Amending section (1)(b) of the bill to add New York City students and parents with lived experience of bullying as members of the task force.
- Adding to the list of factors in (1)(h):
6. Research on evidence-based approaches for preventing and addressing bullying, including approaches that do not rely on exclusionary discipline or law enforcement; and
7. Strategies that meet of the needs of students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ youth, and other populations disproportionately impacted by bullying and harassment.



We also urge the City to include \$5 million for the Mental Health Continuum and an additional \$6 million (beyond the \$6M partial restoration already announced) for restorative justice practices in the final Fiscal Year 2025 budget. Both initiatives play an important role in creating positive school climates, preventing and addressing bullying, and supporting students' social-emotional needs, but the Mental Health Continuum is supported by one-year city funding set to expire later this month, while restorative practices will see a reduction in funding due to the expiration of federal stimulus dollars.

Int. No. 0399-2024

We appreciate the attention that the Council, the Public Advocate, and the Comptroller have given to school accessibility and agree with the underlying goal of Intro. 399, which would require annual reporting on New York City Public Schools (NYCPS)'s compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As AFC detailed in a [report](#) last year, two-thirds of New York City schools are still not fully accessible to students, parents, and educators with physical disabilities. Until the day the City reaches full ADA compliance, transparency about the accessibility status of individual school buildings is crucial, and we would be happy to partner to strengthen Intro. 399 and build on the information NYCPS already provides about the accessibility of school buildings via the Building Accessibility Profiles (BAPs). More immediately, the most important step the Council can take to ensure the ADA has real meaning in the lives of New Yorkers with disabilities is to ensure the 2025–2029 Capital Plan allocates an additional \$450 million—for a total investment of \$1.25 billion—for school accessibility projects.

Int. No. 0733-2024

AFC supports Intro. 733, which would require annual reporting on Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in New York City schools. Local Law 174 of 2016, which contained many similar provisions but sunset after five years, provided valuable data on access to CTE. English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities have historically been under-represented in the City's CTE programs. At a time when NYCPS is expanding career-connected learning, public data reporting could help advocates, families, and the public hold the City accountable for eliminating barriers and ensuring *all* students have equitable access to CTE.

We have several recommendations for amending Intro. 733 to help make the data as useful as possible. Our suggestions include:

- Revising section (b)(7) to require cohort-based reporting on the number of students who enrolled in CTE programs, completed the full sequence of CTE courses, and completed and passed a technical assessment. Such information will make data on the number of *graduates* who completed CTE programs more meaningful and help shed light on the nature of disparities.
- Amending section (c) to add eligibility for the free and reduced-price lunch program, status as a student in temporary housing, and status as a student in foster care to the list of factors by which data must be disaggregated.

We are including our suggested revisions at the end of this testimony.



Int. No. 0771-2024

AFC supports Intro. 771, which would require NYCPS to distribute information on interpretation services. More than 40% of New York City students speak a language other than English at home, but too often, parents who have limited English proficiency do not receive the interpretation and translation services they need to participate in their children's education. For example, AFC frequently works with families of students with disabilities who have never received critical documents—such as their child's Individualized Education Program (IEP)—in a language they can understand. Parents need to know that phone interpretation is available in a wide range of languages, and such information would be especially beneficial to parents whose primary language is not one of the top nine into which NYCPS routinely translates written documents.

To those ends, we recommend the Council amend Intro. 771 to:

- Clarify in section (b) that NYCPS must provide information on translation services, as well as phone interpretation services:
 1. *A list of ~~phone~~-interpretation and translation services offered by the department;*
- Add participation in the special education process as one of the examples of when translation and interpretation services might be used:
 3. *Examples of how such services may be used, included, but not limited to, helping parents communicate with school staff and helping parents participate in the special education process; and*
- Add specificity in section (c) regarding the languages other than English into which the information about the availability of interpretation services should be made available. We suggest:
 - c. *Such materials shall be made available in English and in the 25 most common home additional-languages of students enrolled in the city school district of the city of New York as determined by the department.*

In addition to moving Intro. 771 forward, we urge the Council to ensure the final FY 2025 budget includes \$4 million for the immigrant family communications and outreach initiative, which is currently supported by expiring one-year city funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

By Council Members Stevens, Gennaro, Riley, Nurse, Gutiérrez, Narcisse, De La Rosa, Louis, Farías, Salaam, Joseph, Schulman, Restler and Cabán

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring the New York City Department of Education to report information on Career and Technical Education programs in New York City public schools

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

1 Section 1. Title 21-A of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by
2 adding a new chapter 9 to read as follows:

3 Chapter 9. Career and Technical Education Reporting

4 §21-971 Reporting on career and technical education.

5 a. Definitions. As used in this chapter, the following terms have the following meanings:

6 Career and technical education. The term “career and technical education” or “CTE” means
7 a curriculum designed to provide students with certain skills that will enable them to pursue a
8 career in certain disciplines, including but not limited to agricultural education, business and
9 marketing, family and consumer sciences, health occupations, technology and trade, or technical
10 and industrial education.

11 Certified instructor. The term “certified instructor” means a teacher who has earned a
12 teaching license in a specific career and technical education subject.

13 Student. The term “student” means any pupil under the age of twenty-one as of the
14 September 1 of the academic period being reported, who does not have a high school diploma and
15 who is enrolled in a school of the city school district of the city of New York, not including a pre-
16 kindergarten student or a preschool child as preschool child is defined in section 4410 of the
17 education law.

1 b. No later than April 30, ~~2024~~2025, and annually by April 30 thereafter, the department
2 shall submit to the mayor and council and post conspicuously on the department's website, a report
3 for the preceding academic year which shall include, but not be limited to the following:

4 1. The total number of high school-level CTE programs in schools of the city school district
5 of the city of New York, including for each (i) the name of the program; (ii) the field, discipline
6 or industry for which the program prepares students; (iii) an outline of the skills students develop
7 in the program; (iv) the number of courses in the program; (v) the name and number of industry
8 partners associated with the program; (vi) the ~~high~~-school at which the program is located; (vii)
9 whether the ~~high~~-school is a CTE-designated high school; (viii) whether the CTE program has
10 received approval through the New York state department of education's CTE approval process;
11 (ix) the grade levels served by the program; (x) the number of students enrolled in the program;
12 and (xi) the number of students registered as being in attendance for the program, for each course
13 component that requires attendance, irrespective of whether that attendance is in person or remote.

14 2. For each school offering at least one CTE program, the number and percentage of ~~age-~~
15 or grade-eligible students ~~at each high school~~enrolled in any such CTE-program;

16 3. The number and percentage of students in a CTE program who engaged in a related (i)
17 un-paid internship; (ii) paid internship;

18 4. The number and percentage of applicants who listed a CTE-designated high school as
19 their first choice in the high school application process during the previous application year;

20 5. The number and percentage of applicants who listed a CTE-designated high school as
21 their second choice in the high school application process during the previous application year;

22 6. The number and percentage of applicants who participated in the high school application
23 process who enrolled in a CTE-designated high school;

1 7. ~~To the extent such information is available, the number and percentage of graduates from~~
2 ~~the~~For the cohort of students who entered ninth grade four years prior to the academic period being
3 reported ~~and the cohort who entered ninth grade six years prior to the academic period being~~
4 ~~reported, the number and percentage of students~~ who (i) ~~enrolled in~~ completed a CTE program; ~~;~~
5 ~~and having~~ (ii) completed the full sequence of courses for such program;; (iii) completed a
6 technical assessment; (iv) passed all components of the technical assessment; (v) received a high
7 school diploma; (vi) received industry credentials; (vii) obtained employment in a related field
8 within six months of graduation; (viii) enrolled in a two- or four-year college within six months of
9 graduation; and (ix) enrolled in a vocational program within six months of graduation; ~~obtained~~
10 ~~one or both of the following (i) industry certification; (ii) employment;~~

11 8. ~~The 4-year graduation rate for CTE-designated high schools;~~

12 9. ~~The 6-year graduation rate for CTE-designated high schools;~~

13 108. The number of designated full-time and part-time certified instructors providing
14 instruction at each ~~high~~-school with a CTE program; and for each CTE-designated high school,
15 the ratio of full-time certified instructors to students at such school; and

16 119. The number of staff in each school or program who received professional
17 development or training administered by the department and relating to CTE as of the prior school
18 year.

19 c. The data required to be reported pursuant to paragraphs two through ~~eleven~~ seven of
20 subdivision b of this section shall be disaggregated by (i) race ~~or~~ /ethnicity; (ii) gender; (iii) special
21 education status; (iv) English language learner status; (v) eligibility for the free and reduced price
22 lunch program; (vi) status as a student in temporary housing; (vii) status as a student in foster care;
23 and (viii) community school district.

1 d. No information that is otherwise required to be reported pursuant to this section shall be
2 reported in a manner that would violate any applicable provision of federal, state or local law
3 relating to the privacy of student information or that would interfere with law enforcement
4 investigations or otherwise conflict with the interests of law enforcement. If a category contains
5 between 1 and 5 students, or contains an amount that would allow the amount of another category
6 that is 5 or less to be deduced, the number shall be replaced with a symbol. A category that contains
7 zero shall be reported as 0, unless such reporting would violate any applicable provision of federal,
8 state or local law relating to the privacy of student information.

9 § 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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