



Coalition for Equitable Education Funding

Testimony for New York City Council Committee on Education

Re: Fiscal Year 27 Preliminary Budget - Education

March 23, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about the proposed budget. My name is Gray Burce, and I am a senior at School of the Future High School. Today, I am testifying on behalf of the Coalition for Equitable Education Funding, a group of more than 120 organizations advocating for the resources needed to ensure every student receives a high-quality education, with a focus on those who have the greatest needs.

We are pleased that Mayor Mamdani's Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget extends and baselines funding for two essential initiatives — preschool special education services and summer programming. However, the Preliminary Budget leaves out funding for other critical education programs that are currently benefiting thousands of NYC students and their families. The following programs are funded for this year only and are, therefore, at risk of being rolled back or eliminated as soon as this July:

- **Learning to Work**, which provides support to over-age, under-credited students to help them earn a high school diploma and develop a post-secondary plan. (\$31M)
- **Sensory Exploration, Education & Discovery (SEED)**, which supports students with intensive sensory needs. (\$12M)
- **Infant/toddler child care seats in high-need communities**—programs that just got up and running this January and represent the first city-funded non-means tested child care for infants and toddlers. (\$10M)
- **Restorative justice**, which helps students stay in school, repair relationships, and resolve conflicts instead of being suspended. (\$6M)
- **Mental Health Continuum**, which provides expedited mental healthcare to students at 50 high-needs schools. (\$5M)
- **Early childhood education outreach**, which helps families learn about early childhood programs and will be essential as the City launches 2-K. (\$5M)
- **Immigrant family communications and outreach**, which helps families receive information about their child's school in a language and mode they can access. (\$4M)
- **Student Success Centers**, which allow trained youth leaders to build a culture of college-going and help their peers with the college admissions process. (\$3.3M)

We call on the City to **baseline funding for these programs** in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, so that students and families will know they can continue relying on these programs in future years, and to make additional investments that are needed to support students, especially those who have the greatest needs.

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