



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

News Release

For immediate release

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Response to the Release of the 2025 New York State English Language Arts Test Scores

August 11, 2025 (NEW YORK CITY) — Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the release of the 2025 New York State English Language Arts (ELA) test scores for New York City students in grades 3–8:

The state test scores released today, which show that 56% of third through eighth graders are reading proficiently, offer a promising sign that real change is beginning to take root in classrooms across the City — while also driving home the need to go further to ensure the promise of NYC Reads reaches *all* students.

From the beginning, we knew that fundamentally transforming the City's approach to early literacy instruction would be a multi-year effort that would take time to bear fruit. Taken together with the spring screener data NYCPS released last month, the 7.2 percentage point uptick in proficiency rates — and particularly the 12.9-point increase for third graders — is a hopeful signal that we are headed in the right direction. The City must maintain its commitment to embracing the science of reading and continue to provide teachers with the support and coaching they need to implement new curricula effectively.

At the same time, the large number of students scoring level 1 and the continued disparities by economic need, race/ethnicity, and disability status make clear that many students need extra support to become strong readers. We continue to hear from families who are unable to get their children the help they need to learn to read within NYC public schools. The next phase of NYC Reads must go beyond core instruction to ensure all students who need targeted intervention receive it. We look forward to learning more details about NYCPS' recently announced plans for expanding access to evidence-based reading intervention.

Every parent expects the public schools to teach their children how to read. As we approach the next Mayoral Administration, literacy must remain a [top priority](#), building on the work of NYC Reads to create lasting change.

About Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)

Since 1971, Advocates for Children of New York 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 who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. AFC uses four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and compel needed reform.