

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Mallory Tompkins and I represent 82nd Street Academics.

Last year around this time, I spoke with several members of the council about Jayden. His family had recently arrived from the Dominican Republic and I was sharing with you the joys of supporting his progress with English. Ten days after I spoke with you, I saw Jayden in person, neither of us knowing it would be the last time we shared a table together for more than a year.

Jayden's family is part of the roughly 70% of students in our communities that are home for learning this school year. As part of the Corona, Jackson Heights, and East Elmhurst neighborhoods, Jayden's family is part of an area that has been disproportionately hit by the dangers of the coronavirus. We know that social emotional learning, conversational skills, and fluency are best achieved when students are in supportive environments that are in person, surrounding themselves with peers that are also working towards these same goals.

Our mission is to complement the public school system so that students can have equal access to a college education. We celebrate their home language by making sure they are served by staff members that live and work in their community. Since the pandemic, we have introduced tutoring programs and extended our options for 2 year old children to support families who are attempting to get back to work.

Jayden's grit and resiliency knows no bounds. He's joined our tutoring program to continue his language skills. He's continued to thrive in small groups that have been supported by the allocations from friends to the agency such as councilmembers Moya and Dromm.

With food pantry lines and homelessness on the rise, why is this important? Jayden's mom is a single parent who needs to work a full time job to keep the lights on at home. How many families can go back to work without a place for their child to go? Or without a guide for their child's education outside of school hours?

We respectfully request \$80,000 to fund essential services for our families such as full time preschool and tutoring.

Thank you for your continued support of our learning community.



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June 04, 2021

By E-mail:

Honorable NYC Council Speaker Johnson
and Finance Committee on Health
New York City Hall
City Hall Park
New York, NY 10007

RE: HANAC Testimony Letter to support the expansion to \$3.25 Million for Access Health NYC in FY2022.

To the Honorable NYC Council Committee on Health:

I trust that this correspondence finds you very well. My name is Enrique Jerves, and I am the Program Director for HANAC's Health Access Program. I am humbly submitting this correspondence to serve as a testimonial correspondence to support the expansion to \$3.25 Million for Access Health NYC in FY2022.

As you are keenly aware, the COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the New York State Healthcare system. While members from all different communities have suffered during this pandemic, the immigrant community is one of the groups that have been most disparately impacted. Historically the underserved immigrant communities face incredible obstacles in receiving adequate health care during regular times; during this pandemic, the immigrant community has faced even more significant difficulties obtaining primary care, specialist support, hospitalization, and COVID-19 healthcare resources needed for people that have the COVID-19 Virus. My experience helping the immigrant community allowed me to learn the needs in this community. The immigrants usually encounter problems related to language support, and most cases have expressed concerns about public charge policies.

To reiterate, before the onset of the Covid-19, immigrant communities were already vulnerable to illnesses such as but not limited to depression, substance abuse, and other negative factors such as high-blood pressure or diabetes. Now the mental health experts fear that many more will be prone to trauma-related disorders due to this pandemic. For example, as we have heard on the news, immigrants are impacted by the loss of a family member, loss of employment, lack of health coverage, lack of access to testing, and most cases have no information for the vaccination process. During the pandemic, we assisted in providing essential social services during the pandemic. We helped many immigrants obtain primary care, health insurance, and referrals for financial assistance in New York City programs. At the height of the pandemic, our programs

continued to provide essential services for the immigrant communities. These individuals may be at higher risk of developing long-term challenges.

The Health Care Act ("HCA") aims to ensure all of us get access to health care regardless of the status or the income perceived per person, but more importantly, HCA was enacted to prevent deaths. The costs involved in health care in New York State are already high; it is even worse for individuals who do not qualify for health insurance.

This cut will impact the program finance, and we would not be able to continue helping those who struggle with health conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, or who have a prior history of substance abuse which might increase the risk of more ongoing distress due to the pandemic triggering factors. Many uninsured communities have yet received medical coverage due to lack of insurance eligibility, or just they are afraid of immigration policies. Your support is a "must" in the middle of these challenging situations.

Thank you so much for allowing us to provide this testimony, and please do not hesitate to let me know if you need any additional information that you may need in support of this request.

Respectfully submitted,



Enrique Jerves,
HANAC Health Access Program Director
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May 25th Finance Budget Hearing Testimony

Rachel Posner

Topic: Education in the budget

I am submitting this testimony from my perspective as an 18-year veteran teacher in Title I high schools, a parent of a student with an IEP in a diverse elementary school, and a member of several organizations that have been fighting consistently for educational justice and equity, including Teachers Unite; NYC Opt Out; MORE - the Movement of Rank and File Educators; New Yorkers for Racially Just Public Schools; and PRESS NYC - Parents for Responsive, Equitable, Safe Schools.

This is a pivotal moment for our school system, as we confront both longstanding needs and inequities, as well as the impact of a global pandemic on our communities and schools. So many aspects of our education system are interwoven, as well as being connected to issues and policies beyond the schools, and therefore any list of real priorities will necessarily be long. These are the areas that I urge the City Council to prioritize in the budget for next year.

I approach this testimony with the understanding that the “curb-cut effect” means that when we center the needs of the most marginalized or most vulnerable, we better serve all students in the end. I also believe that we must partner with and learn from the foremost experts in the field of education, and have included names of those who can best support the crucial work for educational equity and progress our budget must promote.

1a. Smaller class size is essential: This one policy shift and investment would positively impact countless issues. For too long we have tolerated overcrowded class sizes determined by budgetary constraints, instead of insisting that the children in our public schools receive what they actually need. When we see that the average private school class has between 10-15 students, while the average public school class has around 30 students, we must immediately sound the alarm, because that means we have allowed the education of our democracy’s next generations to become a commodity that is accessible at different levels of quality based on wealth. This should never have been acceptable and it remains unacceptable now.

The reason wealthy parents are willing to pay for small class size is because it provides the benefits of individual attention, flexibility, academic personalization—all of which cultivate a sense of community, mattering, and belonging—while also enabling children to focus, and decreasing the need to act out to get their needs met. I have witnessed this firsthand as a teacher, working with small groups, as well as with my own neurodivergent child, for whom small class size immediately improves her ability to focus and her engagement with the material. Given the myriad social, emotional, academic, and just basic human needs our children will be bringing into schools next year, this is the top priority. Consult with Leonie Haimson of Class Size Matters.

1b. We must decrease teaching load. In addition, teachers must be able to devote more time to each student, and smaller class size will also mean a radically reduced teaching load for each educator, allowing the career of teaching to be sustainable in ways it has not often been. This issue

is especially pronounced in high schools. Instead of having 5 classes of 30-35 students each (meaning an individual teacher could have between 150-175 students during one semester), a high school teacher should have no more than 4 classes of 20 students each. The difference this would make in terms of relationship building, individual attention, and academic feedback and responsiveness, cannot be overstated. Making teaching a career that does not place unreasonable demands on teachers will mean a teaching force that retains knowledge, experience, and skills, which will benefit our schools and children exponentially.

2. Invest in Humans, not Corporations, for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment: Replace all corporate, standardized and/or computerized instruction and assessment with student-centered, teacher-created practices, and the training to make these work. End all spending on these wasteful, invalid, and impersonal programs and direct resources toward the long-term investment in training teachers and administrators in the kinds of meaningful, humane, authentic instruction and assessment practices that uplift children and sustain teachers.

To be clear, along with small class size, the single best investment NYC can make in the education of its children is to invest in actively and courageously resisting the top-down, corporate-driven, culturally unresponsive, inherently discriminatory, and pedagogically invalid standardized testing regime that has abused and failed our students for the past 20 years. NYC and New York State should be a beacon of innovative and meaningful schooling in the nation by piloting and insisting on authentic assessment practices that drive critical thinking, active engagement, and lifelong learning—all of which are squelched by standardized tests. This initiative must include:

- Project-based learning and assessment (Partner with the New York Performance Standards Consortium, Mastery Collaborative, the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment)
- Historically- and Culturally-responsive and sustaining pedagogy (Partner with NYU Metro Center, the Coalition for Educational Justice, and seek the expertise of Gholdy Muhammad, Zaretta Hammond, David Kirkland, Samy Alim, and Django Paris)
- School-wide enrichment model (Partner with the University of Connecticut Renzulli Center)
- Universal design for learning (Seek the expertise of Andratesha Fitzgerald, author of *Antiracism and Universal Design for Learning*)
- Grading for Equity (consult Joe Feldman and Crescendo Education Group)
- Prioritize depth and learning-to-learn over breadth and shallow memorization (consult Deborah Meier and Jack Schneider)

3. Family engagement must be two-way and culturally and linguistically responsive: The structures currently set up to engage families are not culturally responsive, and they alienate too many. There must be a reckoning with the ways that existing structures replicate a white, middle-class, English-speaking set of norms, and the premises underlying this must be questioned and dismantled.

- Hire school community members to be language liaisons or in-language family coordinators, to ensure that outreach is culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Establish criteria and a blueprint for building relational trust between school and families

- Partner with the Family Leadership Design Collaborative, the NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools
- Seek the expertise of leaders in this work including Ann Ishimaru, Joanna Geller, and Iheoma Iruka

4. Center Social-Emotional Support, Healing-Centered & Restorative Practices, Not Policing:

Our schools must not be set up as the doorway to the school-to-prison nexus. Police have no place in our schools; current school safety officers who are beloved by their school communities for their loving service should be kept on in a restorative and supportive capacity. (While restorative justice is far preferable to carceral practices, it is still grounded in the criminal justice system; preferably, these practices can be called “Restorative Practices” and will be applied among all members of school communities, including adults, so as to avoid replicating a racist disciplinary system.)

- Hire school-based Restorative Practices Coordinators in every middle and high school
- Provide ongoing restorative practice training for all school staff
- Require that restorative practice trainings integrate an anti-racist approach
- Develop restorative practices curriculum with teachers and students

I support the women of color-led Alliance for Quality Education demand to expand access to social & Emotional Supports

- 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.
- Partner with LiberateED and seek the expertise of Dena Simmons for anti-racist social and emotional learning approaches.
- Scale up the Bronx Healing-Centered Schools Working Group and consult parent leader Rasheedah Harris and scholar Shawn Ginright

5. Additional Initiatives to Lean Into:

- Train all educators in the Science of Reading, which puts the curb cut effect into practice in relation to reading instruction: Consult Literacy Trust and the Institute for Multi-Sensory Education
- Pilot and scale up Ethnic Studies in all schools: Consult Rethinking Schools and the Education for Liberation Network
- Explicitly teach Civic Engagement by practicing democratic governance structures including among students and within school communities: Consult Deborah Meier and Central Park East 1 Elementary School
- Prioritize hiring and retaining Black, Latinx, AAPI, and LGBTQ+ teachers by making our schools actively anti-racist, responsive, and safe for them; by removing barriers to

certification that disproportionately block BIPOC young people and adults from becoming certified

Testimony of Communities United for Police Reform (CPR)
Submitted to the New York City Council Finance Committee
By Maya Williams
For May 25, 2021 Executive Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year 2022

Communities United for Police Reform ('CPR') respectfully submits these comments to the New York City Council.

I. About Communities United for Police Reform (CPR)

CPR is a multi-sector campaign working to end discriminatory and abusive policing practices in New York. CPR organizes coalitions of over 200 local, statewide and national organizations on various campaigns. Through community organizing, policy advocacy, public education, litigation, civic engagement and other strategies, CPR works to build a broad-based movement to end discriminatory and abusive policing, promote community safety and respect for the rights and dignity of all New Yorkers. Our members and partners include over 200 local and national organizations, many of whom are based in and led by those most directly impacted by abusive policing.

Through this campaign, we have helped to change the local conversation on public safety, increased the knowledge and practice of New Yorkers in observing and documenting police misconduct, and have won key policy victories including the repeal of the statewide police secrecy law ("50a") by the NYS legislature, passage of the Community Safety Act (which established the first Inspector General of the NYPD and an enforceable ban on bias-based policing) and Right To Know Act in the New York City Council.

II. Comments regarding New York City Executive Budget for FY22

My name is Maya Williams, and I am testifying on behalf of Communities United for Police Reform. I want to thank Chair Dromm for hosting this hearing today. I am a black mother, brought up in Bedford-Stuyvesant and currently residing in East New York, some of the most overpoliced and burdened neighborhoods in this City. Its fearful, but it brings me here to speak about the real changes in how the city invests their monies in Black, LatinX and other communities of color.

This year the Mayor is claiming that his proposed Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 22 is a recovery budget and one that makes massive investments in working families. But when we look at the actual numbers that he is proposing, it's clear that the mayor is out of touch with what it will take for Black, Latinx and other communities of color to recover from COVID-19.

- This past year laid bare the deep inequalities in this city when it comes to basic things like jobs, housing and healthcare. Black, Latinx and other communities of color were left with little resources and community support during this period of crisis because social services and public supports were stretched thin and completely unprepared to absorb or respond to the increased level of need. The pandemic meant that Black, Latinx and other communities of color didn't have guaranteed access to basic things like healthcare, mental health care, food and housing, all while experiencing more grief, death and job loss than other communities.

- For our communities to really recover and be able to stand on their own two feet, we need to not only address the gaps created by COVID-19, but we also need to address the long-standing divestment from Black, Latinx and other communities of color, we need to address the reasons these communities were so disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.
- The core reason that our communities were so hard hit by COVID-19 is that for decades the city has spent more money on policing and criminalizing our communities than it has on ensuring that there are strong youth services, education, healthcare, mental health care, and workforce development.
- The mayor's proposed Executive Budget for the city doesn't change this imbalance. Instead of using this opportunity of increased federal and state aid to make significant and needed investments in public services, the kind of investments that will enable our communities to fully recover and emerge from this pandemic stronger and more well resource. The mayor is instead proposing for the most part to restore funding to some programs that were cut and make some scattered increases to public services, all the while not addressing how heavily the city invests in policing and prisons.

I am calling on the city council to take this opportunity and shift the tide for Black, Latinx, and other communities of color and commit to making era-defining changes into mental health, education, youth services, and public health.

- For example, the mayor is proposing an ill-conceived plan to deploy alternative mental health response teams across the city, at a cost of \$112 million dollars, even though the pilot program hasn't even begun. While we think it is positive to consider alternative mental health response, the B-HEARD program design does little to pre- or post-crisis mental health care and does not make significant investments in the community based mental health care services that are desperately needed in Black, Latinx, and other communities of color. Our communities need more than a band-aid, we need quality accessible mental health care from culturally competent providers in community-based settings, we do not need more trips to the hospital, more waitlists, and more clinicians that are out of touch with our communities.
- In addition, the Mayor is proposing that the NYPD mental health co-response teams receive an almost 3 billion dollar increase and staffing increases. This is an inappropriate investments and further entrenchment of the NYPD in mental health services.

This money, as well as the \$112 Million for the B-HEARD program, is much better invested in community based, peer- counselor let programs that have proved track records of reaching communities most in need.

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- In addition, we are also calling on the council to end the NYPD's youth initiative which pays over 300 NYPD officers to interact with young people in the neighborhood. Young people need more services, jobs, and opportunities for educational advancement, not more interactions with the NYPD. Police should have absolutely no role in youth programming and this money should be moved to services providers with proven track records of working with young people, including city wide programs like SYEP that are lifelines to so many young people in the city.

- In addition, we are also calling for the NYPD to be completely removed from schools, including SSA's and for this money to be re-invested in the DOE and particularly in programs that support restorative justice and trauma informed schools.
- Lastly, I am calling on the council to stop investing more money in the NYPD under the guise of reinvention and reforms, it is unacceptable that they NYPD is potentially going to receive an addition \$14 million dollars to hire community assistants and ambassadors to do things like fix basketball hoops. If neighborhoods need these kinds of services, non-NYPD jobs should be created to fill this need and community-based organizations should be receiving these funds. We do not need more police officers, we need more counselors, teachers, nurses, and youth workers, these are the kinds of jobs that we needed this past year and did not have enough of, while we had plenty of police officers.
- Black, Latinx, and other communities of color deserve a recovery budget, we deserve to quality public services, we deserve to be invested in, our children's future deserves to be invested in. We need a council who will stop increasing the NYPD's budget year after year, who will take a bold new approach to city budgeting and invest in services that keep our communities safe.