

**Testimony of New York City Public Schools
on CUNY's College Prep Initiatives in Middle School & High School
Before the NYC Council Committees on Education and Higher Education**

February 8, 2023

Testimony of Jade Grieve, Chief of Student Pathways, New York City Public Schools

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph, Chair Dinowitz and Members of the New York City Council Education Committee and Committee on Higher Education. My name is Jade Grieve, New York City Public Schools' (NYCPS) Chief of Student Pathways. Today I am joined by Melanie Mac, Reina Utsunomiya, and Kristen Harris from my team. We are pleased to be here today to discuss our deep sense of urgency and commitment to strengthening our students' college and career pathways, and our partnership with CUNY to do so.

Since this is the first time I'm appearing before the committees, I wanted to briefly share some background. I've spent close to 20 years in education and workforce policy and programs, starting in Australia working for both federal and state administrations and prior to this role, spent seven years in the non-profit and philanthropic sectors working on the expansion of early college and career pathways across many US cities and states. I'm one of the many who came here, fell in love with the city and never left. I'm also of the many who was first in my family to earn a college degree and from an early age understood education as the critical path to changing my odds of economic success and financial security. I've been motivated from very early in my career to expand those same educational opportunities and have dedicated my career to doing so.

At the outset, we want to thank the Speaker and both Chairs for your commitment to the expansion of early college and early career exposure and experiences for NYC youth. We welcome the chance to talk with you today about our programs, strategies, and partnership plans for the future.

Chancellor Banks has set a bold North Star for New York City Public Schools: to ensure each student graduates on a pathway to a rewarding career, long-term economic security, and equipped to be a positive force for change. In setting this bold goal, Chancellor Banks has not shied away from the hard truths about our graduates' college and career readiness and NYCPS is deeply committed to improving upon our rate of 58 percent of the high school cohort graduating college ready as they transition to a postsecondary pathway. We would like to share the actions we have taken over the last year to achieve better outcomes and to strengthen college and career pathways.

The newly established Office of Student Pathways has identified four key strategies: 1) strengthening college and career advising; 2) expanding high quality career-connected pathways and aligned internships and apprenticeships; 3) enhancing 21st century skills like financial and digital literacy, and 4) extending early college credit and credential opportunities to provide more young people with a head start on their future after school. In the year since Chancellor Banks

took office, we have taken significant strides towards these four priorities by launching and expanding:

- The FutureReadyNYC pilot with more than 30 high schools and CUNY's close partnership
- The Career Readiness and Modern Youth Apprenticeship pilot in over 50 high schools;
- CUNY's College and Career Advising Fellows in 10 high schools;
- CUNY's Tutor Corps supporting 1,500 students in over 20 high schools with targeted tutoring on 9th grade algebra; and
- Starting the planning phase of our new High-Impact Tutoring initiative, which will fund tutoring in kindergarten through grade 2 literacy and/or grade 6 through 8 math, depending on the school. This month, providers involved in this initiative began their work with 3,500 students across 65 schools. Both CUNY Tutor Corps as well as CUNY Reading Corps are serving as providing these tutoring services.

Under Chancellors Banks and Matos Rodriguez, there is now deeper alignment across institutional values and missions and an even stronger commitment to our shared student body with 41 percent of our students transitioning to CUNY after graduation. This year, both Chancellors have relaunched the NYC Public Schools-CUNY Steering Committee to drive towards shared goals while collaborating on FutureReadyNYC, a signature initiative for improving college and career readiness, and providing students a strong hand off to postsecondary pathways. As NYC Public Schools prioritizes college and career advising and awareness, CUNY is emphasizing that their middle school and high school programming build college and career aspirations. Our focus on early college credits and credentials and career-connected pathways also dovetails with CUNY's efforts to build seamless access and transition points while increasing the readiness of incoming students.

I will now hand over to my colleague Melanie Mac who will share more details on the core areas of NYCPS-CUNY collaboration in support of stronger student readiness and postsecondary success.

Testimony of Melanie Mac, Senior Executive Director of the Office of Student Pathways

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph, Chair Dinowitz and Members of the New York City Council Education Committee and Committee on Higher Education. My name is Melanie Mac, and I am the Senior Executive Director of the Office of Student Pathways. I bring my heart and my experience as a New York City high school teacher, assistant principal, and proud founder of three high schools in the Bronx and Manhattan to this role - and the topics we are discussing today are deeply important for me in the various roles I have played serving New York City students.

Advising and Awareness

The following programs highlight college and career advising and awareness programs for middle and high school offerings that reflect NYC Public Schools and CUNY shared missions, values, and goals:

- **CUNY Explorers:** Through campus visits and workshops hosted by current CUNY students who serve as visit guides, CUNY Explorers reinforce the message that all students can go to college, college is affordable, and students can take steps now to achieve their college goals. The program supports students in grades 6-10 to develop a college identity, promote a college-going mindset, and encourage meaningful career exploration through near-peer mentoring and interactive workshops.
- **College and Career Advising Fellows:** This initiative trains recent college graduates to work as full-time advisors from September through June in 10 NYC public schools to provide personalized college and career advising.
- **College and Career Bridge for All:** This program ensures that all graduates have a near-peer mentor to support seamless transitions to postsecondary and avoid summer melt, including specialized referrals for students with disabilities, students in temporary housing and foster care, and multilingual learners and immigrant students. Near-peer mentors, or Bridge Coaches, are current college students, most of whom attend CUNY and are NYCPS graduates.

Expanding College and Career Readiness and Acceleration Opportunities

Central to today's hearing topic is expanding access for high school students to college courses, which increases college and career readiness while accelerating the path to postsecondary degree and credential attainment.

Dual enrollment opportunities give students awareness and early exposure to college-level instruction, providing enrichment for students wishing to take more advanced coursework, and giving students the chance to begin earning college credit. That makes college access and exposure more real for students without having to use their own money or any financial aid while they are in high school.

Through our partnership with CUNY, we are also examining the most viable ways to expand dual enrollment opportunities for students across the city. We currently have two long-standing approaches: Early College schools and programs and College Now.

Early College schools enable students to earn both a high school diploma and an Associate's degree, or up to two years of transferable college credit upon high school graduation, at no cost to the student. The goal is to boost college enrollment rates with as little college debt as possible. Early College schools allow for students who may otherwise not pursue higher education or who are under-represented in high-growth career fields— particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)— to seamlessly transition from high school to college by enrolling in college classes as high school students. DOE and CUNY have a cost-sharing Memo

of Understanding in place to support 19 such early college schools across the five boroughs. This agreement is contingent on DOE and CUNY respectively being able to secure funding each year from its own sources.

Early College schools are just one of our strategies to make dual enrollment more accessible to students. Starting and maintaining early college schools and programs is resource intensive and limited to students who are able to enroll in those schools. In partnership with CUNY, we are also deepening our collaboration on College Now, which offers a clearer and more accessible runway for schools to participate in dual enrollment opportunities.

College Now offers free college credit courses, pre-college courses, college and career awareness courses and activities, summer programs, STEM Research Academy and access to CUNY campus facilities and events. College Now courses are offered before and after high school students' day or on Saturdays, on college campuses and in high schools. The program serves over 21,000 students from more than 470 high schools, amounting to over 30,000 individual enrollments. Over 90 percent of the students receive passing grades in their courses and earn college credits.

High Quality Career-Connected Pathways

The FutureReadyNYC pilot, which launched this school year, brings together system-wide best practices we've learned about career-aligned instruction, dual enrollment, and postsecondary planning. Participating schools and educators are receiving support and funding to develop labor market-aligned pathways to ensure that students are future ready; these pathways will include:

- Career-connected instruction aligned to high-growth, livable wage jobs;
- 21st century skills, including financial and digital literacy skills building;
- Dual enrollment opportunities through early college coursework and industry-validated credentials;
- Work-based learning, including paid employment experience;
- Individualized college and career advising

Based on our experiences with the Early College and Career and Technical Education schools, we are matching schools with CUNY partner campuses where students will have the opportunity to take College Now courses aligned to their schools' career pathway focus. By creating stronger alignment between career themes and college courses, we are reimagining how to make dual enrollment more accessible and meaningful for our students. The idea of early college may evolve from serving a small number of students to a more equitable option for high school students.

Ensuring Equity

NYCPS-CUNY has established a range of important equity-centered initiatives to strengthen advising and early college awareness opportunities for historically marginalized and underrepresented students. Those include:

- Admissions and CUNY fee waivers: All financially eligible graduating students applying to CUNY schools receive an application fee waiver. Over 50 thousand waivers are distributed annually across all high schools. Waiver allocations are determined by enrollment of FRPL eligible students, with CUNY and NYCPS sharing the costs at \$65 per waiver.
- Immigrant Student Ambassadors Program: This program supports the social-emotional and early college awareness of immigrant students in select NYCPS high schools by providing trained CUNY college students to serve as near-peer mentors and small-group facilitators. Ambassadors help immigrant students and multilingual learners engage in their educational journey and support them in the preparation of their postsecondary goals.
- Summer Intensive English Language Program (SIELP) is a College Now course offered in partnership with Hostos, offering an opportunity for MLLs/ELLs to improve their English, writing and critical thinking skills, build community, and earn three college credits.
- As the Council is aware, last week Mayor Adams signed a local law, sponsored Chair Dinowitz, to provide additional support for students with disabilities as they prepare to enter institutions of higher education, including CUNY. We look forward to working with CUNY and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities in implementing this law and building on our existing partnerships.
- One such partnership is between CUNY's Office of Student Inclusion Initiatives and the New York City Public Schools' Transition and College Access Centers (TCACs), which are located in each borough. We look forward to a continuation of this work and deepening our connections to CUNY to better serve NYC students with disabilities through the implementation of the new local law.

Looking across the NYCPS-CUNY middle school and high school collaborations, we have laid a strong foundation of programs that enable many students to get an invaluable start on their postsecondary path through early college exposure, mentorship, and credit-bearing opportunities. We have learned together with our CUNY colleagues about readiness, transition, and persistence in college. The road ahead with CUNY and other higher education partners is to explore affordable ways to scale early college awareness and credit opportunities and make them available to more students while ensuring that their early college work connects to what they are doing in high school and what they plan to do in postsecondary. We can do some of this by drawing from tried-and-true practices like expanding dual enrollment and early college credit, while learning lessons from other communities like embedding early college in students' school day so that they can equitably access these opportunities.

We look forward to continuing to evaluate the quality of the college and career pathways and programs we are developing collaboratively with CUNY in pursuit of our central mission of ensuring our students' long-term career success and economic security. As we continue to evaluate our current partnership and ways to grow and adapt post-pandemic to meet student needs, we want to build on the strong alignment, partnership, and collaborative leadership of our Chancellors.

We thank you for your strong support and partnership and look forward to your questions.

**Testimony of Andrea Soonachan
CUNY University Dean for K16 Initiatives
New York City Council Joint Public Hearing
Committee on Higher Education Jointly with Committee on Education**

February 8, 2023

Introduction

Good Afternoon Chairs Dinowitz and Joseph, and members of the NYC Council Committees on Education and on Higher Education. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today about CUNY's K16 Initiatives. It is an honor to be here, representing the City University of New York as University Dean for K16 Initiatives. I joined CUNY three years ago, after almost twenty years supporting college access and success for New York City's young people, through community based organizations, research settings and the New York City Department of Education. Along the way I was able to earn a doctorate in Education. Like millions of New Yorkers, I have CUNY to thank for much of this. My father immigrated to New York from the West Indies and worked his way through an engineering degree at City College. His degrees opened doors to him, empowered him to fight the bias that he often experienced as he rose through his career, and gave my family entry to economic security and a life well beyond what he ever imagined for himself. New York City has been a place of community and opportunity for my family and I've dedicated my career to ensuring that our city remains a place where all students can envision and achieve their brightest possible future.

K16 Initiatives is a unit within CUNY's central office, representing CUNY's deep investment in and commitment to our future students, and our understanding that we must work in partnership with NYC Public Schools to reach our shared goals for equity and access. Today's K-12 students are tomorrow's CUNY students - an average of 65 to 67% of incoming first-time freshmen at CUNY are recent graduates from NYC public high schools.

CUNY's Office of K16 Initiatives supports the reciprocal partnership between these systems as well as with community partners to help ensure that entering undergraduates are prepared for success. The unit is home to more than a dozen innovative programs that seek to prepare students for post-secondary success with strong on-ramps including pre-college curriculum, dual enrollment opportunities, near-peer advisement, tutoring, and career-connected activities. Our programs are organized around 4 pillars that are essential to increasing access and success in higher education; Building college and career aspirations; Building seamless access and transition points; Increasing the academic readiness of incoming students, and Supporting systemic coordination.

Building College Aspirations: CUNY Explorers

CUNY Explorers begins in middle school to build college aspirations. CUNY Explorers brings 6th-10th grade students to our campuses, to experience age-appropriate and customized visits. We hire and train CUNY students to work as visit guides. Visit guides design interactive and career connected experiences for students that immerse them in the life of a college student. Visit activities include hands-on labs, like

extraction of DNA from a strawberry at Queensborough Community College, demonstration of a dental hygiene clinic activity at City Tech, or flight simulation and a tour of the Robotics Room with the Aviation Institute at York College. Visit guides reinforce the message that all students can go to college, college is affordable, and students can take steps now to achieve their college goals.

In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, CUNY Explorers hired 95 students as visit guides, conducted 685 visits and reached 36,378 unique 6th to 10th grade students.

CUNY Tutor Corps

CUNY Tutor Corps embeds tutoring into New York City public middle and high school math classrooms across the five boroughs while providing sustainable employment and practical career development for CUNY undergraduate and graduate students who serve as tutors. Tutors work part-time under the supervision of a host teacher. Tutor Corps provides extensive professional development and coaching for tutors that enable them to deepen their own understanding of STEM content and professionalism while providing high-quality, classroom-embedded tutoring by a diverse tutor pool aligned to New York City Public School priorities. Tutor Corps conducts outreach to all schools, focused especially on high needs areas and works with teachers and administrators to identify students who can benefit from tutoring.

This year, we are partnering with New York City Public Schools to address one of the most critical issues facing our students - closing skills gaps and accelerating learning following the disruptions of covid. We will be placing 100 tutors in 21 high schools, providing small group intensive Algebra tutoring to 1500 students.

In the 2021-22 school year, we hired 366 tutors, placed in 65 high schools and 45 middle schools serving 3,399 school students. These schools include many in high poverty census tracts, and serve a diverse student population. Last year, 46% of students tutored were hispanic and 27% were Black. 21% had an individualized education plan and 23% were English Language Learners. 88% qualified for free or reduced lunch or HRA benefits.

Ensuring Academic Readiness: College Now and Early College

We know that the barriers to college access and success include readiness for the academic expectations of a college classroom. Our dual enrollment and early college high school programs are rooted in decades of research demonstrating the effectiveness of early exposure to college level work to increase college success, especially for students traditionally underrepresented in higher education. A recent literature review commissioned by New York State found that early college experiences and advanced coursework were associated with higher student achievement, college enrollment and college graduation and even had long term positive effects on employment and wages after graduation.

K16's largest program, College Now provides an opportunity for students to earn college credits by participating in college-preparatory courses and activities. 19 CUNY campuses partner with over 470 NYC public and charter high schools to offer college courses each year. Each campus has a coordinator

and support staff dedicated to the program, who work closely with staff at individual partner schools to recruit and place students.

In 2021-2022, we served nearly 22,000 students in College Now. 80% were eligible for free or reduced lunch or HRA benefits. 62% of participants identified as female. 30% were Hispanic, 19% were Black and 26% were Asian. 8.6% had an Individualized Education Plan to receive special education services. 10% were English Language Learners. In the fall of 2022, 24,679 New York City Public School graduates entered CUNY degree programs as first-time freshmen (FTF) within six months of high school graduation. Of these CUNY freshmen, approximately 29% had participated in College Now opportunities while in high school.

College Now participants have stronger postsecondary transition and success rates compared to students who do not participate. Of the 2021-2022 NYC Public School graduates who previously participated in College Now, about 85% matriculated into college within six months of their high school graduation. On average, College Now alumni transfer 6.41 credits to CUNY, earn more credits in their first semester (10.66 vs. 8.31) and have a higher GPA after their first semester than NYC Public School graduates who did not participate in the program. This academic momentum persists through graduation as College Now alumni show 13 percentage point higher three-year associate degree completion rate (33.2% vs 20.0%) and 7 percentage point higher six-year bachelor's degree completion rate (69.1% vs 62.1%) in CUNY than those who did not participate in the program.

While many College Now courses offer opportunities to earn college credit for students who have demonstrated readiness for college coursework, we have also begun to intentionally expand offerings for students who need additional support. As CUNY colleges have ended remediation, colleges have begun offering corequisite courses, in both math and English Language Arts. In CUNY's corequisite model, a credit bearing Pathways course, or general education courses unified across all campuses, is offered at the same time as mandatory, non-credit support. Students who are assigned to developmental education in math, reading, and/or writing on the basis of CUNY's skill proficiency markers are all eligible to enroll in credit-bearing Pathways courses with corequisite support. For high school students College Now corequisite courses provide a clear path to readiness with the benefit of earning students transferable college credits. We currently offer eleven different corequisite math courses, through seven colleges. For many non-STEM majors, this course also satisfies the required college credit math course. We also offer a preparatory course called LINCT Math for high school students to ensure they are prepared and ready for this corequisite math course. In the 2021-22 school year, 306 students enrolled at 8 different high schools completed this two course sequence which awards both high school and college credits with a success rate of 90%. Already this academic year we have 11 high schools with 475 students doing the LINCT Math course sequence.

Given the success rate of these courses to date and their critical importance to supporting a strong postsecondary start for students, we look forward to working with our partners at New York City Public Schools on continuing to develop and expand innovative approaches to ensuring all students have access to postsecondary opportunities while in high school. This year, we collaborated on the design and launch

of “FutureReady NYC,” a partnership between New York City Public Schools, CUNY campuses, and employer partners. FutureReady NYC will give students access to reimagined educational experiences with the chance to receive early college credits and industry-valued credentials in high-growth fields, including health care, technology, business, and education. CUNY is a major partner in this work providing student visits to college campuses through CUNY Explorers and early college credits through College Now courses. This school year, 34 high schools are partnered with eight CUNY campuses seeking to engage approximately 5,000 high school students. What makes FutureReady NYC unique is that the College Now courses offered at each high school are designed around a 2 or 3 course sequence which aligns to knowledge and skills within an industry and tied to specific high-need job titles. Designed around best practices in career-connected learning, these sequences paired with school-led work-based learning experiences, internships and curated student advisement allow young people to proactively explore careers earlier and more intentionally.

Early College

Early college high schools are public schools that partner with institutions of higher education to blend a rigorous college-prep curriculum with the opportunity to earn up to two years of college credit while in high school – at no cost to students and their families. The program is designed to scaffold the transition from high school to college with additional support, and make sure students are ready to jump into courses rather than needing remedial education when they arrive.

The City University of New York’s Early College Initiative (CUNY ECI) was established in 2003 to develop and support Early College High Schools in New York City. Today, CUNY Early College is responsible for 19 early college schools that serve over 10,000 students. K16 provides guidance, project management, and financial resources to create and maintain early college schools, which are categorized into four models 6 to 12; 9 to 12; 9 to 13 and P-TECH.

The ECI model was designed to serve low-income youth, first-generation college-goers, English language learners, and other groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education.

In 2021-2022, the diverse student population of over 11,000 students included: over 43% that identified as Latinx/Hispanic; nearly 33% who identified as Black; and nearly 13% identified as Asian. The population was 47% female. 11% of students were English Language Learners and 18% of students had an IEP. 86% qualified for free or reduced lunch or HRA benefits.

Students’ academic preparation upon entering high school is wide-ranging, as evidenced by their 8th grade exams. In 2019 nearly 50% (48.2%) scored a 1 or 2 on their ELA exam while nearly two-thirds (65.6%) scored 1 or 2 on their math exams.

While fully representing the ethnic, racial, demographic and academic diversity of our city’s students, ECI students graduate from high school on-time at a higher rate than similar students.

In 2022, our network wide on-time graduation rate was 93.3%, compared to the city-wide rate of 78.8%. The graduation rate for English Language Learners who entered high school in 2018 was 82.2%. Overall, 71.7% of graduates earned college credits prior to graduation, with the average being 25.2 credits, and 77.8% of graduates enrolled in post-secondary education within 6 months of graduation.

Two schools offer the opportunity for students to earn their associates degree by the end of 12th grade. Of these, 57% percent of the June 2022 graduates at Kingsborough Early College Secondary School graduated with an Associate's Degree and 40% of the June 2022 graduates from Hostos-Lincoln Academy for Science earned an Associate's Degree from Hostos Community College.

Admissions Process

The NYC Public Schools Office of Enrollment determines admission methods for the Early College High Schools. Our schools have two types of admission methods:

The ten P-Tech high schools are Educational Option schools which admit students across all academic levels, with the goal of promoting academic diversity at the school. Students are grouped into three, equal-sized categories - low, middle, and high - based on their final seventh-grade course grades.

Applicants in each category will be prioritized for one-third of seats at each school. If there are more applicants from a category than prioritized seats for that category, applicants will be randomly selected for seats. The random number for each student's application is used for the random selection process.

The Grades 6-12 early college schools primarily enroll students at 6th grade and give priority to students and residents in specific districts where they are zoned. Most students continue into their schools' high school program. The high school entry has academic screening for 9th grade seats.

The Grades 9-12 and 9-13 early college schools are screened schools for 9th grade entrance. One school is an international school for English Language Learners who have resided in the United States for four years or fewer.

Recruitment

Prospective students learn about our schools through a variety of ways. NYC Public Schools publishes a HS Directory each year with a range of information including admissions, program offerings, clubs and sports. Each Community School District publishes a similar directory to provide information on district middle schools.

To increase diversity, school admissions are based on a rank-choice and lottery system. In 2020, one of our schools, Manhattan Hunter Science HS launched a diversity initiative through DOE's Office of Enrollment to give priority to applicants eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (based on family income) for 69% of seats.

Each year, schools are encouraged to participate in district, borough and citywide fairs, where they share informational materials with families and dates/times of open-house tours.

Schools also do direct outreach to elementary and middle schools in the district and promote their schools on social media and on their website.

Increasing Access through Advising Programs: Bridge

Our continuum of programs is capped by College & Career Bridge for All (CCB4A), the largest near-peer matriculation support program in the nation, supporting 50,000+ graduates annually. The program runs from June through September, supporting students from graduation through their first month of college should they enroll. Bridge hires and trains current college students, who largely graduated from NYC Public Schools and attend CUNY, and groups them in borough-based teams, where they are supervised by professional counselors and experienced coaches to support graduating seniors from high schools in their community with a wide range of postsecondary planning and matriculation related tasks.

Bridge coaches receive extensive training in how to support students as they transition to their postsecondary plan, including understanding the types of degree and non-degree options, navigating college enrollment steps and researching non-degree career programs both at CUNY and with community-based organization partners. Coaches meet with these partners during training and are able to support students to enroll in a strong match college or career plan.

College & Career Bridge for All is implemented with an intentional focus on student-coach connections. In order to foster a strong connection, coaches are matched with high school students with similar characteristics (borough of residence, language, and high school). Through weekly outreach Bridge Coaches provide prospective students with support on completing college applications, financial aid paperwork, navigating enrollment holds, uploading proof of COVID vaccination, registering for courses, and general socio-emotional guidance.

The diversity of our Bridge peer mentors is key to the program's success. Of the 199 peer mentors that participated in College & Career Bridge for All in 2022, 147 were CUNY students. Among these 147 CUNY students, 34% were Asian, 25% were Black, 14% were Hispanic, 13% were multi-racial.

In 2022, College & Career Bridge for All served 54,000 seniors from the Class of 2022, ensuring all graduates had the support of a near-peer mentor. Of this group, 35% had a substantive interaction with their mentor that moved their postsecondary planning forward. The largest impact of the College & Career Bridge for All program is on enrollment outcomes. In 2022, 71% of graduates served by College & Career Bridge for All enrolled in college in Fall 2022 and 58% of college-bound students chose a CUNY campus (21,225 students). A 2020 impact evaluation found that students who connected with their coach enrolled in college at a rate 7 percentage points higher than comparable peers. The program is particularly effective for students who are Black, Hispanic, and/or living in low-income neighborhoods, three groups typically underrepresented in higher education, with those students seeing the greatest impact on enrollment from engaging with their coach. The effects of connecting with a near-peer on

applying to college after May is almost double for Black and Hispanic students compared to that for white students.

Conclusion

Thank you for your interest in this important topic, and for your support of CUNY's efforts to increase access and readiness for all students. CUNY's K16 programs are a national model in their scale, scope, impact and depth of partnership with a public school system. Everyday we are working alongside our partners across New York City Public Schools to eliminate barriers and strive towards our shared goals for all students to access promise filled futures and economic security. The success of these efforts is the result of the collective effort of many hundreds of staff and leaders, all of whom deserve great credit for what we have accomplished. We are proud of all of these successes, and we know that there is so much more to do. We look forward to our continued partnership and what we can continue to accomplish together.

City Council Testimony- CUNY High School Partnership Programs
Dr. Joanne Russell, Senior Vice President and Provost
CUNY Kingsborough Community College
February 8, 2023

Chairpersons Dinowitz and Joseph, and members of the NYC Council Committees on Education and on Higher Education, I am Dr. Joanne Russell, Senior Vice President and Provost at Kingsborough Community College. I am pleased to provide information about Kingsborough's programs with New York City high schools. Although my testimony will focus on Kingsborough's College Now and Early College Initiative (ECI) programs, Kingsborough also has a state-funded Liberty Partnership program at the Thomas Jefferson campus in Cypress Hills that serves 360 students who are at risk of dropping out.

I will briefly describe the College Now and ECI programs, the students served, and student outcomes.

Kingsborough College Now (KCN) Program

Kingsborough's College Now program is the oldest and largest College Now program within CUNY. We are celebrating thirty-nine years of excellence in preparing students for the rigors of college academics and the transition from high school to college.

In the College Now model, most classes meet at the high school either before or after the regular school day. Kingsborough also offers Saturday and summer programming, in which classes are taught on the college campus. Students may earn up to 12 college credits, which will appear on their Kingsborough college transcript. Courses are taught by high school faculty who have met all requirements to be hired as adjunct faculty in the appropriate departments at Kingsborough Community College.

Kingsborough appoints a college faculty member as a course coordinator, who meets with all of the College Now faculty who are teaching a particular course to provide professional development. Participating high schools appoint College Now liaisons who serve as the primary point of contact with the College and are responsible for providing information to eligible students and developing a program of coursework tailored to their needs and interests.

During the academic year 2021-2022, Kingsborough's College Now program offered credit classes in 39 New York City public high schools. With funding from the Department of Youth and Community Development's Work, Learn, Grow program, Kingsborough collaborated with an additional 69 high schools city-wide to offer college transition courses that include career exploration opportunities as well as tools for smoothing the transition from high school to college.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, Kingsborough's College Now program enrolled 8,111 unduplicated students, accounting for 11,714 enrollments in college-credit courses (6,821) and college and career awareness courses (4,893). 88% of the enrolled students were successful in earning college credit. Within this same cohort, 23% of the students were Asian, 22% Black, 27% Hispanic and 26% White. We continue to note an increase in the percentage of female participants-62% of female students compared to 38% of male students in 2020-2021, a pattern which is consistent with pre-pandemic trends. This is also consistent with a national increase of

female enrollment in higher education. To assist the program in recruiting and retaining male students, we have included opportunities for male students to meet with our Director of the Men's Resource Center.

We continue to innovate to improve our offerings. For example, we have worked to ensure that all of the classes that we offer are either accepted as General Education (CUNY Pathways) credit, or are part of a sequence of courses that are a pathway to a degree program. As part of the FutureReady NYC program, we are currently offering College Now courses in two partner high schools that will allow students to earn 12 credits towards the AS degree in Health Sciences.

Because costs of textbooks are so high, we are replacing textbooks with free, high quality open educational resources. The development of open educational resources is typically a 2-semester project that involves regular meetings between high school and Kingsborough faculty to build the course materials and learn how to use them. This project also has the additional benefit of ensuring consistency between the college and high school faculty, and supports their collaborative work.

Kingsborough Early College Secondary School

In addition to the College Now program, Kingsborough partners with CUNY and the DOE to run an Early College Initiative high school housed at the Lafayette Educational Complex, Kingsborough Early College Secondary School (KECSS). At KECSS, students have the opportunity to earn an AA degree in Liberal Arts by the time they graduate from high school.

KECSS students enroll in college credit classes as part of their regular school day. These courses are dual credit courses, meaning that students earn both high school and college credit upon successful completion. For some classes, students are fully integrated with college students on the college campus. Other classes may be run with an entire section devoted to KECSS students. All courses are taught by college faculty.

At KECSS, about 425 students are enrolled in grades 9-12, 69% of whom are classified as economically disadvantaged and 66% minorities-32% Hispanic, 25% Black, 8% Asian and 34% White. Prior to the pandemic, about 70% of graduating seniors had earned the AA degree in Liberal Arts degree at the same time as their high school diploma, and 80% of students had earned at least 45 credits. Understandably, these success rates have slipped during the pandemic years so that in 2022, 56% earned their AS degree, and 66% earned at least 45 credits. We expect that these success rates will return to pre-pandemic values.

Kingsborough has been working with CUNY and John Dewey High School to start another ECI that is focused on education studies. We are especially interested in attracting young men of color into a teaching career by working with them early in high school.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you today.



UFT Testimony to the City Council Education Committee and Higher Education Committee's Joint Oversight Hearing on CUNY's College Preparation Initiatives in Middle and High Schools

February 8, 2023

Good afternoon. My name is Janella Hinds and I am the UFT's Vice President for academic high schools. I am joined by Leo Gordon, our Vice President for career and technical education high schools, and by Richard Mantell, our Vice President for middle schools. On behalf of the union's more than 190,000 members, we would like to thank Higher Education Committee Chair Eric Dinowitz and Education Committee Chair Rita Joseph for holding today's hearing.

The UFT is committed to collaborating with the City University of New York to ensure that students across the city have access to quality education and educators throughout their years in New York City public schools and colleges. We were pleased to see that as part of the University's recently announced strategic framework, CUNY pledged to work with other stakeholders to help ensure that a larger number of their entering students are prepared for college work, starting with early education and assisting them up to and through high school. We also share their commitment to equity throughout this process by ensuring that high quality transition programs help eliminate achievement gaps between racial, ethnic, and socio-economic groups.

Our members currently collaborate with CUNY staff and faculty across multiple programs designed to support students in their transition to higher education, including the College Now program offered in nearly 425 NYC public high schools, which provides college-credit courses, college-preparatory courses and activities, experiential-based summer programs, and access to campus facilities and cultural offerings. In addition, our members are proud to work with the CUNY Early College Initiative, which offers students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education the opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree (or up to two years of transferable college credit) at no cost to students and their families.

Other CUNY programs for which our members offer support and services include the NYC Science and Engineering Fair (NYCSEF), the CUNY Creative Arts Team, the CUNY LINCT (Lessons in Navigating College Transition) to Success program, the CUNY Affinity Group, the CUNY Explorers program for middle school students, the CUNY Tutor Corps in Math and Computer Science, which brings students from CUNY colleges into middle and high school classrooms, the CUNY Peer Enabled Restructured Classroom (PERC) program, the CUNY Debating U.S. History (DUSH)

program, the Graduate NYC program, the STEM Research Academy, and CUNY College Counseling Initiatives.

In addition, the UFT has worked closely with CUNY for decades on programs designed to support continuing education and certification opportunities for our members. Current partnerships between the UFT and CUNY include an annual catalog of college courses sponsored by CUNY and other local institutions of higher education and hosted by the UFT and UFT Teacher Center, a partnership to increase the diversity of the NYC teacher pipeline through Grow Your Own programs for high school students and paraprofessionals, funded through a three-year grant from NYSUT, and the recent launch of the CUNY School of Labor Studies Advanced Certificate in Community Leadership.

Collaboration across the K-16 education system is essential in ensuring that all New York City students have full access to college and career readiness opportunities. The UFT is committed to supporting this effort and continuing to expand our role in making CUNY's College Preparation Initiatives in middle and high schools accessible and effective for our city's young people.



The Education Trust–New York

**Presented before the New York City Council
Committees on Education and Higher Education
Re: Oversight - CUNY's College Preparation Initiatives in Middle and High Schools
February 8, 2023**

The Education Trust–New York is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to educational equity. We work to attain educational justice through policy and advocacy that results in all students – and especially those who are low-income or students of color – achieving at high levels from early childhood through college completion.

The Education Trust–New York appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony to the New York City Council's Committees on Education and Higher Education regarding CUNY's College Preparation Initiatives in Middle and High Schools.

The City University of New York's (CUNY) college preparation initiatives serve as an integral bridge for many students' future by providing important connections to secondary schools and four-year colleges. Programs like College NOW operate in 460 high schools and serve about 32,000 students, serve as a hallmark of the positive outcomes associated with dual enrollment programs. Additionally, thirteen CUNY colleges partner with 20 DOE schools through CUNY Early College to provide high school students with the opportunity to earn up to two years of college credit at no cost to them.

Dual enrollment programs provide many benefits to students and the education system at large. Enrolling and completing a dual enrollment course is associated with several positive academic outcomes for students across race and socioeconomic status including: higher rates of high school graduation, college enrollment, completing a college degree and shorter average time to bachelor degree completion. Scaling dual enrollment programs throughout the City also has the potential to fight back declining enrollment.

Unfortunately, not all students have access to these programs. CUNY's Early College program serves less than five percent of DOE schools and CUNY's college NOW serves less than 15 percent of DOE students. There is also limited information available regarding the impact of these programs and how the administration is planning to scale them.

We would like to offer the following recommendations to the administration regarding dual enrollment programs:

1. **Provide Data Transparency:** The DOE and CUNY should collect, analyze and publicly post dual enrollment data to identify equity gaps in each school district across the city. This data should also include instances where students' academic performance demonstrates that they are prepared for dual enrollment courses, but not enrolled due to the unavailability of courses in their school. This information should be used to set

specific access and equity goals for dual enrollment and other postsecondary opportunities in each school.

2. **Prioritize Rigor:** New York City should ensure that college and high school programs serving underserved students are held to the same standards of rigor as traditional college courses. College courses offered within secondary schools should use the same syllabi and exams as comparable courses taught on college campuses. Students should also be provided with the support necessary to thrive in college courses.
3. **Increase Awareness:** Many high school students may want to obtain college credit, but do not know that they can. The DOE and CUNY should develop strategies to increase awareness about dual enrollment programs. They should provide students and families with information about dual enrollment programs such as waived fees, course offerings, benefits of enrolling and course requirements in the family's primary language.
4. **Improve Partnerships Between Colleges & DOE:** New York City should require partnering colleges to establish partnership agreements that include a plan for providing student advisement and support. This plan can include providing dually enrolled high school students with access to the same support services (e.g., academic advising and counseling, library resources, etc.) that are available to regularly enrolled college students and designating at least one person to serve as a liaison for each borough and postsecondary institution partnership.
5. **Guarantee Credit in Postsecondary institutions:** Dually enrolled students are not guaranteed credit at both secondary and postsecondary institutions upon successful completion particularly when attending non-CUNY and SUNY schools. New York City should work with private institutions in the city and state to ensure that dual enrollment courses are transferable.
6. **Offer Dual Enrollment Courses on CUNY Campuses:** Students should have the opportunity to enroll in dual enrollment courses taught by college professors on CUNY campuses. These on campus opportunities would help ensure students are receiving a comparable credit to college expectations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit written testimony. We look forward to working with you to help provide a more equitable education for all New York City students.

Please contact Dia Bryant, executive director, The Education Trust–New York, at dbryant@edtrustny.org with any questions regarding this testimony.

York College/CUNY
Les Raphael, Director of College Now
New York City Council Joint Public Hearing
Committee on Higher Education Jointly with Committee on Education
Council Chambers – City Hall
February 8, 2023

Good afternoon members of the Higher Education and Education Committees. My name is Les Raphael and I am the director of College Now and several other academic skills programs at York College. I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about the College Now program at York College.

OVERVIEW

As with all College Now programs around CUNY, York's program follows CUNY Central Office guidelines and submits an annual proposal for approval and funding. The program also works with the York Vice President for Academic Affairs, involved college offices, and department chairpersons and faculty members for guidance and approval for the program's offerings, especially credit classes, which make up over 97 percent of the classes offered.

College Now at York was implemented in fall 2000 and currently works with five partner high schools in southern Queens, which are significant feeder schools to York and enroll between 100 to 500 students each academic year. Those high schools are:

- Construction Trades, Engineering and Architecture
- John Adams
- Hillcrest
- Richmond Hill
- Springfield Gardens Educational Complex

In addition to these schools, York's program also works with

- The Queens High School for the Sciences at York – a specialized school on the York campus that enrolls approximately 300 students a year, all taking dual credit classes.
- Approximately 14 smaller participating high schools in Queens, which enroll around 10 to 50 students during the year. These schools include: (1) Young women's Leadership Academy, (2) Cambria Heights Institute for Health Professions, (3) Humanities and Arts, (4) August Martin, (5) Law Enforcement, (6) Queens Gateway to Health Sciences, (7) Epic South, (8) Academy of Medical Technology, (9) Mathematics, Science Research and Technology, (10) New Visions Charter, (11) Queens HS for Information,

Research and Technology, (12) Frederick Douglas Academy VI, (13) Cambria Heights Academy, and (14) Benjamin Franklin.

Some of the basic guidelines and structuring of York's College Now program include:

- working with liaisons and representatives at our larger partner and smaller participating schools to plan, recruit, and then enter students into a York-based online application, which are reviewed for official enrollment in credit classes,
- purchasing books and materials used in approximately 20 percent of classes,
- using free Online Education Resources (OER) materials in approximately 80 percent of classes, and
- requiring that all instructors are vetted, approved and provided orientation and training by the appropriate academic departments.

The College Now program is sensitive to the needs of students with disabilities. Although the high schools are responsible to provide those students with support services, the liaisons at York's larger partner and representatives at our smaller participating high schools, after obtaining permission from the student and/or parents/guardians, provide York's program with information about students who are identified as needing support so that, at least, their instructors can be aware of those needs.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The number and percentage of female students enrolled in College Now at York are higher than those for male students. See chart below for percentage and total number of students.

Year	Female	Male	Other/Unknown
2018	60.3%(683)	39.4% (446)	0.3% (3)
2019	61.6% (1088)	38.3% (677)	0.1% (1)
2020	63.0% (932)	36.7% (543)	0.3% (4)
2021	64.7% (785)	34.8% (423)	0.5% (6)
2022	57.9% (934)	40.4% (652)	1.7% (28)

The percent of students taking College Now classes at York College when compared to all DOE students is (1) higher for Asian/Pacific Islanders, (2) lower for Hispanic and White students, and (3) approximately the same for Black students. One reason for York's higher percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders is that southern Queens, the area the program serves, has a large population of that

race/ethnicity, particularly those students whose backgrounds are from South Asia: India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. See chart below, which shows percentages and total numbers of students.

Race/Ethnicity of Students Enrolled in College Now Classes at York College

Year	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	White	Other/Unknown
2017	34.1% (526)	29.2% (451)	22.5% (347)	4.6% (71)	9.6% (148)
2018	35.6% (566)	28.1% (447)	22.2% (353)	4.4% (70)	9.8% (156)
2019	35.8% (633)	29.8% (526)	22.7% (400)	4.2% (75)	7.5% (132)
2020	40.0% (592)	26.7% (395)	21.8% (322)	3.3% (49)	8.2% (121)
2021	42.3% (514)	24.1% (292)	22.7% (275)	4.0% (48)	7.0% (85)

Race/Ethnicity of All DOE Students Grades 9-12

Year	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	Other	White
2017	17.3% (52,027)	26.5% (79,641)	39.4% (118,125)	2.7% (8,056)	14.1% (42,268)
2018	17.6% (52,556)	25.7% (76,982)	39.5% (118,394)	2.7% (8,194)	14.4% (43,235)
2019	17.7% (52,794)	24.9% (74,076)	39.8% (118,363)	3.0% (8,892)	14.6% (43,428)
2020	17.9% (52,866)	24.2% (71,177)	40.2% (118,466)	2.9% (8,665)	14.8% (43,463)
2021	18.0% (53,114)	23.6% (69,441)	40.6% (119,356)	3.3% (9,708)	14.5% (42,658)

OFERINGS

Generally, York's program offers approximately 50 to 60 classes per semester and four classes in summer for a total enrollment of around 2400 students per year. Approximately 80 percent of the classes are offered at the high schools, and 20 percent at the York campus, usually after the school day or on Saturday.

Most College Now classes are Pathways courses (fulfilling CUNY general education requirements), and/or introductory major-required courses, and students typically choose from commonly taken first-year courses including psychology,

sociology, biology, finance, history, computer studies, health education, political science, education, and economics.

Sequences of classes that lead to career paths and college majors are also offered. These offerings include sequences in Education, Health, and Business. In addition to providing the appropriate sequences of classes, the academic departments provide presentations to those classes about the opportunities in those fields and the college roadmaps of classes needed to graduate in those areas.

Students are permitted to earn up to 16 credits through College Now.

York's program offers its classes in three different modalities, either at the:

1. high schools, after the school day, or
2. high schools, during the school day, or
3. college campus, after the high-school day or on Saturdays.

Those classes offered during the school day are called dual credit, and college credit curricula are taught to specifically identified high school classes, and upon successfully completing the credit class requirements, students earn both high school and college credit. One example is a high school Civics class offered with a college credit Political Science class.

OUTCOMES

Over the last three years, the rate of successful outcomes (A, B, or C grades) has averaged around 98 percent. See chart below that shows percentage and total number of students.

Year	Successful (Grades: A, B, C) Percent (Number)	Unsuccessful (Grades: D, F) Percent (Number)	Total
2020	97.3% (1797)	2.7% (49)	1846
2021	99.1% (1607)	0.1% (14)	1621
2022	98.8% (2383)	1.1% (28)	2411

College Now students who matriculate at York after graduating high school earn more credits and have higher GPA's in their first semesters than those who did not take College Now classes while in high school. See charts below.

Year	Credits Earned Took College Now	Credits Earned Did Not Take College Now
2017	12.28	10.40
2018	12.43	10.26
2019	11.47	10.29
2020	13.67	10.35
2021	10.17	8.49

Year	GPA's Earned College Now Credits	GPA's Did Not Earn College Now Credits
2017	2.52	2.05
2018	2.49	2.00
2019	2.22	1.87
2020	2.87	2.31
2021	2.22	1.55

MATRICULATING AT CUNY

Each year, between 400 to 550 students from York's College Now program enroll in one of the CUNY colleges after graduating high school. See chart below.

New First-Time Entering Students from York's College Now Program Matriculating at CUNY

Year (Fall)	BMC	BRX	HOST	KBCC	LAG	QBCC	MEC	NYCT	CSI	BAR	BKLN	CCNY	HUN	JJAY	LEH	QNS	YRK	TOTAL
2017	59	1	1	3	28	78	16	51	7	21	18	41	55	43	2	62	68	546
2018	57	0	2	6	23	77	11	71	9	15	7	48	44	32	8	53	64	537
2019	57	1	1	2	28	92	13	55	4	20	18	31	33	52	0	81	60	551
2020	51	2	0	2	31	62	9	43	7	17	11	33	48	28	6	56	46	454
2021	19	0	0	2	10	37	3	34	3	46	7	44	83	16	2	66	30	402

The largest numbers of College Now students who matriculate at York come from College Now programs at three community colleges: BMCC, LaGuardia, and Queensborough.

From 2017 to 2019, there was a slight decrease in the number of students who matriculated at York from all the College Now programs, but a significantly higher drop in number in 2021.

Most of the larger feeder College Now programs showed a similar percentage drop in numbers and the primary reason was the onset of COVID-19. See chart below.

First-Time Entering Students from All CUNY College Now Programs Matriculating at York

Year (Fall)	BMC	BRX	HOST	KBCC	LAG	QBCC	MEC	NYCT	CSI	BAR	BKLN	CCNY	HUN	JJAY	LEH	QNS	YRK	TOTAL
2017	6	3	4	25	85	70	10	10	0	3	7	6	5	9	7	11	68	329
2018	10	7	7	32	82	52	8	16	0	2	14	1	4	13	4	14	62	328
2019	8	8	4	32	78	42	10	14	0	0	10	0	1	7	10	9	60	293
2020	7	16	7	24	68	40	6	10	0	3	4	2	4	11	15	8	46	272
2021	10	13	2	30	31	40	8	5	0	1	0	1	1	1	4	5	30	182

Thank for the opportunity to describe the College Now program at York College.



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The New York City Council
Committee on Higher Education
Committee on Education
Testimony on oversight – CUNY's College Preparation Initiatives in Middle and
High Schools

Ms. Salimatou Doumbouya, Chairperson University Student Senate (USS)
City University of New York

To the members of the committee on Higher Education and the members on the committee on Education. To the parents and community leaders standing for higher education and most importantly the 500,000+ students that make up the City University of New York (CUNY), I say to you all good day and thank you for this opportunity for me to be of great service to the university of the people of the City of New York by testifying on an issue that is not only important to me and the USS delegation, but it's also an issue that is affecting the daily lives of current and prospective students who want to have the opportunity to make CUNY their foundation for Higher Education.

I believe that it is necessary to show the importance of building a solid road to higher education from public schools and ensuring that funding is provided in fulfilling that vision; however, it is equally essential to the current students and prospective students of the City University of New York, that we receive adequate funding to help us be the driving force in the workforce across industries in our City and State.

The CUNY K-16 initiative has over 25 different programs geared towards connecting CUNY to the public classroom; the students of CUNY, who might come out of these great initiatives, are in continual need of program funding and support.

Members of this committee, we at USS are in full support of the K-16 initiatives to help students enter our university; at the same time, Higher Education is a vital lifeline for all communities across our great city, and those students enter our university in continual need for more support. We say that you can't have one without the other.

The students of the CUNY are dealing with near-impossible challenges in their daily aspects of life while passionately pursuing to change their lives and the lives of those around them by understanding the importance of acquiring a Higher Education degree. We are living in a time where thousands of students of the CUNY are facing eviction while falsely being told that funds in the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) are still available; students are dealing with mental health challenges where they need support and are unable to afford a therapist at this



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time; there are thousands of students who especially after post-quarantine of 2020 do not feel connected to the college they are attending because of the lack of student life and investment thereof.

It is said that “CUNY and the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) – the two largest education systems of their kind in the country – are deeply connected by the students they serve.”-- CUNY’s Office of K16 initiatives does a great job in creating “innovative pathways for young New Yorkers to envision and achieve success by engaging strategic partners in confronting systemic educational inequities.”

I would say that the educational inequities are still present in communities that look like mine, where students who enter the historical halls of our university still unprepared and don't know which way to go, let alone feel like they are supported—our student life and support post-quarantine 2020 has gone down in so many ways, and while it is urgent that funding for the K-16 initiatives continue for students in our communities to have an opportunity to be a part of CUNY, our university is in dire need of resources and financial support to help current students in CUNY be on the path to graduation, so they can represent their communities in the workforce across our City and State.

While our brave students in grades 6-12 of the City of NY need the preparation to be successfully prepared to enter our halls in pursuit of higher education, the students of the City University of New York are in immediate need of financial, academic, and mental assistance and support as we prepare to go from college students to the leaders and motivators of our city and state. On behalf of the 500,000+ students of the City University of New York and the millions of alums, some of whom are sitting on the NYC Council as well as a part of this committee, we are calling on you to invest in the people’s university, the City University of New York.

Many born and bred NYers, and NYers who earned their credentials understand this important entity, and yet, it is still difficult to make it through when our students are facing all-time high inflation costs, lack of job opportunities that will give our students a position in leadership, an expensive city where rent prices are ridiculously high, and still trying to pass their classes. Therefore, Please take into consideration not only the students but the students who are actually voters in our city to invest in CUNY, so the future of our city remains in the hands of the people of our great city.

Respectfully Submitted,

Salimatou Doumbouya ,
Chairperson



Testimony for Committee on Higher Education & Committee on Education

FUNDING REQUEST

Read Alliance [READ] is requesting \$100,000 in City Council initiative funding to support its critical dual impact program in the five boroughs of New York City. In FY24, we plan to enroll between 1200-1500 Kindergarten, first and second graders who are striving to read on grade level and employ between 600-800 Teen Leaders as their paid individual literacy tutors. More than 85% of early elementary students who complete the READ program improve more than a grade level in reading, and young people employed as their reading tutors earn minimum wage (up to \$1000 or more) and have the opportunity to participate in robust teen leadership programming that leads to improved social and emotional learning and positive post-secondary outcomes.

WHO WE ARE

Founded on a commitment to educational equity and youth leadership, READ works to accelerate the educational trajectory of early elementary students through the power of teens who provide one-to-one literacy tutoring in under-resourced communities. Read Alliance utilizes more than 22 years of experience to deliver programming in the early literacy intervention and youth development and workforce readiness spaces. Our dual impact model serves two important populations: young children striving to read and teens. Our model addresses the achievement gap for low-income early elementary students while engaging teens in serving their communities as paid reading tutors. Since 2000, Read Alliance has employed more than 15,000 high school youth providing over 18,000 K-2nd grade students with one-to-one reading tutoring in low-income neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs. Read Alliance pre- and post-assessment data throughout its history has consistently shown that after just one program cycle, students who receive Read Alliance intervention average more than a full year's growth in foundational reading skills.

The READ Program helps shrink the achievement gap by providing under-resourced, low-income children the building blocks of academic success through one-to-one tutoring at a critical time in their academic development. Intrinsic to our model is the magic of the near-peer relationship, and the bond that is created between older children and younger children in a tutoring, mentoring and role model relationship. Young people are employed in their own communities, many even working in the elementary schools they attended as children creating a sense of community empowerment and belonging.

MEETING THE MOMENT

In **New York City**, the language of the “science of reading” has permeated most conversations centered on literacy, and literacy itself has been justifiably heralded as a singular factor in speeding academic recovery for young children. Education leaders and advocates have broadly identified early literacy interventions, and phonics in particular, as a strategy to address the severe learning loss experienced by young children, especially children of color and those living in poverty who were already disproportionately struggling before the pandemic. After-school and summer programming have been identified by the city administration as optimal timeframes to help striving readers “catch up.” Youth workforce development, and specifically pathways to postsecondary opportunities have become ubiquitous buzzwords in NYC and NY state, and several new initiatives designed to streamline the connection between high school education and careers after high school have been announced. The compounding mental health crisis facing young people has increased awareness around the importance of programs that promote social and emotional well-being. High-dosage tutoring, which is defined as individual or small group tutoring instruction that occurs at least three times per week, is an approach that is now folded into educational advocacy on city, state, and federal levels. **Read Alliance embodies all of these key strategies (phonics, after school and summer programming, pathways to postsecondary education, high-dosage tutoring, and social and emotional learning) – and we always have.**

2022 OUTCOMES AND 2023 PROGRESS

In FY22, Read Alliance served 749 striving readers and employed 441 unique teens in 659 positions earning minimum wage or more. During that year we facilitated programming in 3 different modalities – virtual, hybrid, and in-person and all three modalities demonstrated similar results in reading level progress – meeting and exceeding targets. In August, READ hosted an Annual Youth Summit at the Ford Foundation for Social Justice, at which 100 young people from all five boroughs, more than 80% of whom were SYEP participants, attended an all-day symposium celebrating their achievements and connecting them to diverse professionals, extracurricular enrichments, and workshops on important professional development and leadership topics.

In FY23, READ has enrolled 548 striving young readers and employed 354 unique teen leaders in all five boroughs of NYC, partnering with 27 different elementary schools (25 public and two charter) and more than 100 high schools, 17 from which we recruit more than 20 teens each year. By the end of this year, we will have enrolled at minimum 1,280 early elementary students in after school and summer school high-dosage tutoring programs in which they are paired with older peers from the same communities who use decoding techniques to teach them how to read.

During the Fall of 2022, planning began for a pilot that aims to concretely connect Read Alliance Teen Leaders' work experience with opportunities for higher education and post-secondary experience working in a classroom. Research shows us the value that BIPOC educators bring to the students of color they teach, despite rampant teacher shortages. This initiative will help young people, especially young people of color, identify and pursue the educational and career opportunities aligned with their high school experience as a Read Alliance Teen Leader.

Over the past several months, we've connected with and nurtured relationships with high school-, college-, and community-based programs focused on equity and access in post-secondary pathways around education. Through these relationships, we are beginning to identify common program guidelines that speak to a range of opportunities for young people in the program including high school engagement (e.g. College Now), summer bridge enrichment programs, paraprofessional pipelines, college persistence support and advising (e.g. NYC Men Teach), and teacher certification preparation. Additionally, we're exploring larger city-wide initiatives (e.g. CUNY Reading Corps) as potential partnerships for ongoing employment and mentorship during college. One of our most robust relationships to date has been with the **College of Staten Island**. Read Alliance has a large footprint in Staten Island, with hundreds of teens tutoring elementary school students, there is a great potential to foster distinct pathways for young people on the Island.

As part of our comprehensive Teen Leadership Program that complements and enhances the meaningful work experience, 16 Read Alliance Teen Leaders from all five boroughs are taking **Hunter College's Urban Education** College Now course during the Spring 2023 semester. Due to substantial interest in the course, Hunter College was able to add a separate section dedicated to Read Alliance Teen Leaders on Saturday mornings in a hybrid environment (with students spending time on campus for some classes and meeting on Zoom synchronously for others). As a result, students can continue to tutor with Read Alliance three or four days after school *and* fully engage with this unique Urban Education class.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Danielle Guindo
Executive Director
Read Alliance



READ ALLIANCE

Read Alliance Impact

Fiscal Year 2022

Read Alliance works to accelerate the educational trajectory of early elementary students through the power of teens who provide one-to-one literacy tutoring in under-resourced communities.

WHO WE SERVE

Early Elementary Students

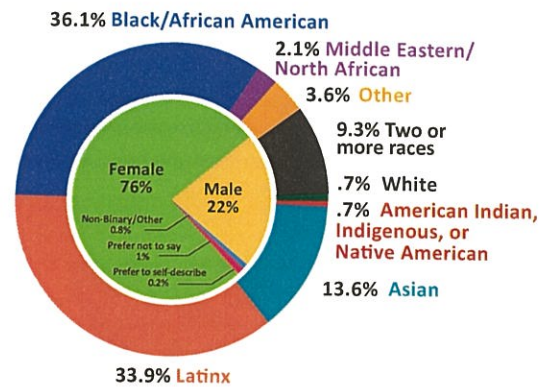
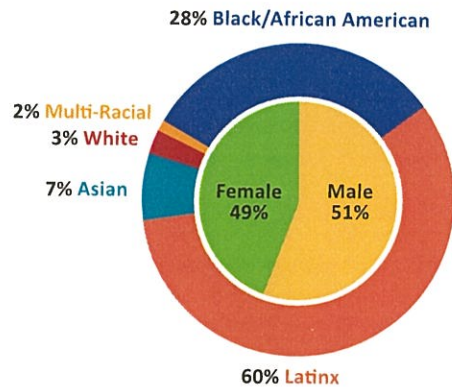
749



Teen Leaders

441

*Employed in 679 positions



"Supporting the academic recovery of lower-performing students should be a top priority for educators and policymakers nationwide."

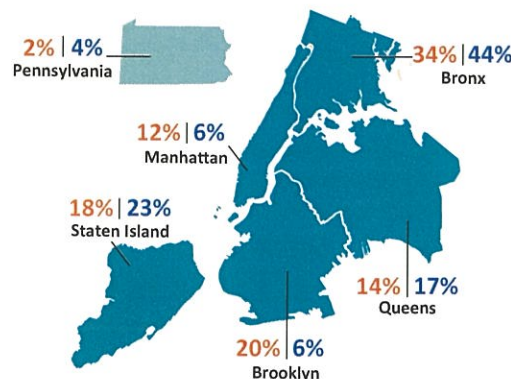
- Martin West, Professor at Harvard's Graduate School of Education

Schools Attended

Key: ■ Elementary School Cohorts ■ Teen Leaders

100%

of striving readers attended public school



93%

of Teen Leaders attended public school

In FY22 Read Alliance served a total of **31** Cohorts of Students attending **23** Elementary Schools, partnered with a Community Based Organization in Reading, PA., and employed teens from more than **84** High Schools, **2** Middle Schools, and **11** Colleges.



READ ALLIANCE

Read Alliance Impact

Fiscal Year 2022

Read Alliance works to accelerate the educational trajectory of early elementary students through the power of teens who provide one-to-one literacy tutoring in under-resourced communities.

Dual Impact Model Creates Powerful Change

Average Reading Level Improvement

0.68

after just one program cycle

Reading Skill Goals Exceeded

During FY22, the average number of sessions READ offered each participant was 27, just above half of what we offered pre-pandemic when we were operating fully in-person. As a result, our reading gain goal for FY22 was adjusted to 0.61 based on the average number of sessions offered this year. With an average of 0.68 reading level gain, these outcomes demonstrate that we exceeded our goals and that reading level progress is consistent across implementation types (in-person, virtual, hybrid).



27

tutoring sessions offered
on average

Youth Workforce Development



\$336,660

Total Wages Earned

Teens Improved in Social-Emotional Learning

Read Alliance is making important strides in promoting Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) outcomes for young people. 98% of youth improved in at least one SEL outcome area and 49% of youth improved in 4 or more SEL outcome areas. 88% of Teens reported that the Read Alliance staff create an environment in which young people feel safe and supported by one another.

21,000+

Hours Worked

"A tutoring program well executed is a tutoring and mentoring program that builds those powerful relationships. But what we know from the evidence is that when we do create that, we can help kids make up academic ground much more quickly."

- John King, President of Education Trust and former US Secretary of Education

Meeting the Moment



Youth Summit: READ's Annual Youth Summit brings together READ Teen Leaders from NYC's five boroughs to celebrate their achievements and success as literacy role models. The Summit provides young people with interactive learning and activities that promote important life and leadership skills. The Summit also serves as an opportunity to connect visionaries, activists and philanthropists who are dedicated to advancing equity and success for young people.

Expansion: READ is positioned to pursue expansion goals both within and outside NYC to meet the rising demand for phonics-based high dosage individual tutoring. Read Alliance's expansion in Reading, PA helps provide a blueprint to sustain READ's expansion there, and potentially apply it to other communities who have the need and capacity to replicate a READ model.



READ ALLIANCE

Education Pathways Pilot

During the Fall of 2022, planning began for a pilot that aims to concretely connect Read Alliance Teen Leaders' work experience with opportunities for higher education and post-secondary experience working in a classroom. Research shows us the value that BIPOC educators bring to the students of color they teach, despite rampant teacher shortages. This initiative will help young people, especially young people of color, identify and pursue the educational and career opportunities aligned with their high school experience as a Read Alliance Teen Leader.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

An initial piece of this planning phase is to explore the current landscape of opportunities for young people interested in pursuing education as a career. Through our conversations with leaders implementing innovative work in this sector throughout NYC, we are identifying potential points of intersection and collaboration to ultimately articulate pathways for future educators.

Building Relationships.

This work cannot be successful without campus champions who are as excited about and committed to short- and long-term outcomes surrounding student success as we are. Over the past several months, we've connected with and nurtured relationships with high school-, college-, and community-based programs focused on equity and access in post-secondary pathways around education. Through these relationships, we are beginning to identify common program guidelines that speak to a range of opportunities for young people in the program including high school engagement (e.g. College Now), summer bridge enrichment programs, paraprofessional pipelines, college persistence support and advising (e.g. NYC Men Teach), and teacher certification preparation. Additionally, we're exploring larger city-wide initiatives (e.g. CUNY Reading Corps) as potential partnerships for ongoing employment and mentorship during college. One of our most robust relationships to date has been with the **College of Staten Island**. Being that Read Alliance has a large footprint in Staten Island, with hundreds of teens tutoring elementary school students, there is a great potential to foster distinct pathways for young people on the Island.

Hunter College – College Now

Sixteen Read Alliance Teen Leaders from all five boroughs are taking Hunter College's Urban Education College Now course during the Spring 2023 semester. Students were identified from a cohort of teens who have articulated an interest in exploring a career in education. Hunter College and Read Alliance co-hosted an information session in December 2022 for students to learn more about the course offering, ask questions, and complete their application. Due to substantial interest in the course, Hunter College was able to add a separate section dedicated to Read Alliance Teen Leaders on Saturday mornings in a hybrid environment (with students spending time on campus for some classes and meeting on Zoom synchronously for others). As a result, students can continue to tutor with Read Alliance three or four days after school and fully engage with this unique Urban Education class.

EDUCATION 250: Intro to Urban Education

The hybrid course explores topics in diversity and equity in education. This experience gives Teen Leaders a thorough look at 'historical, socioeconomic, sociocultural, and political factors that influence schools,' providing a strong foundation for their future as educators.



READ ALLIANCE

Education Pathways Pilot

WHAT'S TO COME

The partnership with Hunter College's College Now program is the first phase in a much bigger endeavor. That students are able to engage in relevant college-level coursework and spend time on a college campus while in high school creates invaluable opportunities for post-secondary and career exploration. Identifying meaningful ways for young people to learn about and engage directly with the field of education is essential. By creating this space through College Now and other partnerships, we can work to demystify the process of becoming educators, thus propelling Teen Leaders towards their future careers.

Right now, the relationships with College of Staten Island and Hunter College represent two spokes in a bigger wheel of opportunity. We aspire to add to this bank of possibilities that Read Alliance Teen Leaders can engage with on their college and career exploration journeys. Moving forward, we will continue to connect with potential high school, CBO, and college partners, including private colleges in and out of New York City, to build a thoughtfully constructed pipeline. Maintaining forward momentum in Teen Leaders' career paths, starting in high school and building throughout their post-secondary education, is paramount to this experience.

To connect further about this tutor-to-teacher pilot program, please reach out to Risa Dubow at risa@gradteamcollective.com.



READ ALLIANCE

READ ALLIANCE

High Dosage Early Literacy Tutoring & Youth Development Program

READ ALLIANCE

works to accelerate the educational trajectory of early elementary students through the power of teens who provide one-to-one literacy tutoring in under-resourced communities.

“I will tell you within my own classroom, the growth that came out of Read Alliance has been **ASTOUNDING!** Truly the kids needed it.”

—READ TEACHER



ABOUT

READ ALLIANCE utilizes more than 22 years of experience to deliver programming in the early literacy intervention and youth development and workforce readiness spaces. Our dual impact model serves two important populations: young children striving to read and teens.

OUR CORE VALUES

1. Founded on a Commitment to Educational Equity
2. Built on a Belief in Young People
3. Thriving through the Power of Connections

OUR IMPACT

- **22** years strong
- **18,000+** striving readers served
- **15,000+** Teen Leaders employed
- **200+** high school partners
- **60+** elementary school partners
- **85%+** of students who complete READ program improve **1.2** grade levels in reading

OUR COMMITMENT

READ ALLIANCE

remains committed to advocating for and working in partnership with communities of color to ensure children and youth benefit from focused literacy and employment opportunities. As demand for our programming has continued to increase, especially with the latest call to implement large-scale tutoring programs as a means to address the COVID-induced learning loss, we have committed to expanding capacity and resources to address the increasingly alarming academic interruption caused by the pandemic.



WHAT SETS READ ALLIANCE APART?

- Literacy intervention is phonics-based, a proven method to improve reading skills
- Dual-impact program serving two age groups: young children and teens
- Intervention is individualized and one-on-one
- Tutoring implemented by young people (not adults)
- Young people are paid, and not volunteers
- The near-peer element promotes social & emotional learning for both groups
- Program is data-driven and outcomes for both groups are measurable
- Programs are implemented after school hours and over the summer

WHAT WE DO & WHY WE DO IT

EARLY ACADEMIC INTERVENTION: children who read at or above grade level by third grade are more likely to continue a successful academic growth trajectory.
GOAL: All children achieve grade level reading by third grade.

TEEN EMPLOYMENT: promotes job readiness, leadership development, postsecondary skills.

GOAL: All young people gain meaningful paid work experience and become economically empowered before high school graduation.

COMMUNITY BUILDING: Meaningful and supportive near-peer connections are created.

GOAL: All children and youth develop positive social and emotional skills that promote future success.

HIGH DOSAGE TUTORING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- After-school program is 45 program sessions, 3-4 days per week.
- Each session is 90 minutes: each student receives 45 minutes of one-to-one reading tutoring and 45 minutes of reading enrichment.
- Each program cohort can host between 35 and 45 students, K-2 grade in two classrooms.
- After 30 or more sessions is considered "complete" based on research study conducted by NYU.
- READ developed an effective virtual program during the pandemic which is an impactful option in schools or communities where in-person programming is not possible.



READ ALLIANCE

“READ ALLIANCE, at its core, is a racial justice organization. The idea to pair teens and children from the same community in a mutually empowering relationship is founded in a commitment to bring children who were behind in this crucially important gateway skill to their grade level standard while enriching the lives of the students and tutors.”

—FOUNDER, AL SIKES

Good Afternoon. My name is Nazrin and I am a freshman at Baruch College. I am here as a Young Advocate alum of Young Invincibles. I want to thank the City Council, especially the Committee on Education and Higher Education for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing.

I graduated from a Queens public high school that offered both AP and College Now courses. Access to these college credit-earning programs played a big role in my pursuit of a college education.

As an immigrant student unfamiliar with the public school system, I was uninformed about opportunities to earn college credit through dual enrollment and AP courses. I had to go above and beyond to learn about the available programs through online research. Without the help of a guidance counselor, I was left alone and stressed. Had I been contacted by a counselor, I would have had the opportunity to challenge myself and earn more college credit. Similarly, I have many immigrant peers who had also experienced a lack of contact, resources, opportunities, and information. School teachers and administrators must actively extend information to students in an inclusive manner to ensure that they are well-informed.

Moreover, there were barriers to my placement within AP and College Now courses. Despite having met the prerequisites I was unable to join a class due to a lack of AP classes and available seating. Because I had learned of these classes later, I was barred from taking my desired advanced coursework. It was usual for a traditional student to face the barriers I had. In the two AP classes, I was able to take, I had to self-teach, find resources through CollegeBoard, and buy materials to ensure I would pass the test and earn college credit. The teachers teaching AP classes were often under-resourced to teach the AP course materials and were limited by funding restraints to provide us with extra test prep material. It's imperative high school teachers be trained and equipped with resources needed to teach AP and college-level courses.

Fortunately, a high school teacher of mine also taught a College Now course offered at my high school and she informed me of the requirements and demands of the courses. Additionally, my school offered College Now courses on the school campus aided me greatly in earning crucial college credits that helped me fulfill my college elective requirements and other prerequisites.

It has helped me financially; saving money from not having to buy material for these classes and giving me the time to work part-time alongside college as many CUNY students frequently do.

The high-school-to-college transition can be overwhelming with the lack of college readiness and financial instability. Lack of academic readiness and insufficient financial aid has been cited as two of the major reasons behind college students dropping out. It is crucial to keep College Now classes and AP courses funded and accessible to students to help in their pursuit of a college education as it helped many including myself in being college-ready. We must also expand the availability of classes and lift barriers such as limited seating that keep students from the opportunity to enroll in such courses. I urge City Council to understand the benefits of having accessible College Now courses on high-school campuses as it gives students the opportunity to earn college credit without the barriers of transportation and food insecurity. Thank you.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Les Raphael

Address: York College

I represent: College Now / York College

Address: York College, CUNY

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Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Salimatus Daudhouna

Address: New York 10026

I represent: University of New York students

Address: University Students Senate

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Laura Myers

Address: laura.myers@cuny.edu

I represent: CUNY / Central

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 2/8/23

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kristen Harris

Address: 110 William St

I represent: NYC Public School S

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Feb 8, 2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Reina Utsunomiya

Address: NYC Public School's

I represent: NYC Public School's

Address: 110 William Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Feb. 8, 2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Melanie Mac

Address: _____

I represent: NYC Public School's

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jode Crieve

Address: Brooklyn NY 11211

I represent: NYC DOE

Address: 52 Chambers St

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 2/8/23

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Danielle Guindo

Address: Executive Director of Read Alliance

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lester Rappael

Address: York College

I represent: Director of Academic

Address: 5K115

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOANNIE RUSSELL

Address: 60 K BCC - 6414 - C.D.G.

I represent: SENIOR VP - FRODOST

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andree Soonechani

Address: UNIVERSITY DEPT K-16

I represent: Futurists

Address: Andree Soonechani@Gmail.com

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms