



**Testimony of NYC Public Schools  
NYC Public Schools Class Sizes  
Before the NYC Committee on Education  
February 29, 2024**

*Testimony of Emma Vadehra, COO and Deputy Chancellor of Operations and Finance, NYCPS*

## Introduction

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph and all the members of the City Council Committee on Education here today. My name is Emma Vadehra, and I am the COO and Deputy Chancellor for Operations and Finance at New York City Public Schools (NYCPS). I am joined by Superintendent Khalek Kirkland representing District 23 in Brooklyn, First Deputy Chancellor Dan Weisberg, and School Construction Authority (SCA) President & CEO Nina Kubota. Thank you for the opportunity to update the Committee on NYCPS' and SCA's work to comply with the State's law establishing new caps on class sizes in NYCPS.

This administration supports the goal of lower class sizes for all of our students. We know we have communities where this is a real challenge for our educators, our students and our families. We also know that lower class sizes are high priorities for our parents and our teachers.

In brief, NNYC PS is currently fully in compliance with the class size legislation. Specifically, this school year, the law mandates that 20% of classes are at or below the newly mandated class size caps, and we are at 40%. In the coming years, however, we have work to do, and will face difficult choices that will be required to maintain compliance as the law's requirements scale up. Today, I'm going to outline some of the work we are doing to stay in compliance with the law, as well as how we're thinking about tackling some of the challenges ahead, and the work we have done to engage stakeholders through the Class Size Working Group.

We look forward to continuing to work with you as we implement the law, and I want to thank you for the support and leadership you have all shown so far.

## Background

In September 2022, Governor Hochul signed legislation that established legislative caps on class sizes in New York City for the first time. These caps are set at 20 for grades K–3, 23 for grades 4–8, and 25 for high school grades. Additionally, the caps are set at 40 for “performing groups” and physical education classes in all grades. The caps do not apply to special education classes.

Under the law, these requirements phase in over five years with 20% of classes required to be under the newly mandated caps this year, 40% next year, and so on, reaching 100% compliance by September 2028.



The law requires that NYCPS submit a class size reduction plan annually through the life of the phase-in, which must be approved by the presidents of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA). If the State Education Department determines that we are not demonstrating sufficient compliance, NYCPS must submit a corrective action plan. State funding is contingent on demonstration of sufficient class size reduction, as well as full implementation of any corrective action plan.

Current compliance varies widely across the City. The districts with the greatest percentage of classes at or below the newly mandated caps are 23 in Brooklyn, 7 in the Bronx, and 16 in Brooklyn, with 73%, 68%, and 67% of classes, respectively, at or below the newly mandated caps. By contrast, the districts with the fewest classes under the caps are 26 in Queens, 28 in Queens, and 31 in Staten Island, with 20%, 23%, and 24% of classes, respectively, at or below the new caps.

## Our Progress So Far

We are currently only in year one of the implementation phase of the class size law, and I'm happy to report on the work done so far, and the planning we are doing for the future.

We convened the Class Size Working Group, to guide our implementation of this work and ground it in community engagement. The working group members brought 48 diverse perspectives to implementing this law, and included parents, advocates, union representatives, principals, teachers, Panel members, elected officials, and others. They provided over 50 recommendations that have been and will continue to be invaluable as we move forward.

I want to thank you, Chair Joseph, for your service on this working group, along with Council staff and everyone else who participated. For everyone involved in the Working Group, as well as our communities around the City—we will continue to engage on this topic. The Chancellor believes it is critical to continue to get community input as we implement the law.

We've been able to complete our needs assessment to determine what resources will be necessary to implement the law, as has the SCA. As directly recommended by the Working Group, we've also completed a survey of Principals to test our assumptions around our needs, including the space, the staffing, and the associated funding for both. I'll go through these elements shortly.

We also worked closely with the UFT and CSA, as required, to develop our first Class Size Reduction plan for this year. New York State Education Department (NYSED) accepted the Class Size Reduction Plan this fall. In November, we submitted our first class size implementation report under this legislation, showing that 40% of our classes were at or below the caps—twice the level required by the law. NYSED approved this as well, and NYCPS has received all of the funding contingent on compliance with the law.



We are currently in the process of developing and finalizing policies for next year, to ensure we remain in compliance—even with some of the challenges that lie ahead. This includes teacher recruitment, school-based budgeting and staffing policies, and capital planning. I will share more now.

## Implementing the Law

As we work to implement the law, we are thinking about four key components as we plan for implementation in future school years: Space, Staffing, Costs, and Equity. In each of these areas, we are getting to work; but we also see certain tradeoffs in the years to come.

### Space

On space: with fewer students in each classroom, most schools will need to utilize more classrooms to accommodate their current enrollment.

We've surveyed principals on what they think their needs are to try and nail down how to address those needs, as well as reviewed our own data. Many schools may be able to find space within their buildings by reducing administrative space or reprogramming. We estimate there are roughly 500 schools that will need more classrooms than they currently have. Some of these schools need just a few classrooms; some need as many as 78.

A lot of schools that need just a few classrooms may be able to make minor adjustments to make this work without substantial changes. However, some will not; and some schools have much larger needs, as noted earlier.

One way to address this concern would be to embark on a substantial capital construction program. More space is absolutely required. As President Kubota can share, this comes with not just a price tag, but there are also only so many sites currently available which both meet our qualifications at the scale required to meet the need for more space within our least compliant districts, and are also located in close proximity to the schools that will need additional classrooms in order to comply without reducing enrollment.

Another way to address this concern would be to reduce enrollment at some of these schools, which was recommended by the Working Group. We are looking very carefully at this recommendation, as we want to ensure we can continue to consider the preferences of families. We know many families take zoned schools into account when choosing where to live, and we know that when students don't get into their schools of choice, they are more likely to leave the NYCPS system (for example, go to a charter or private school).

Additionally, the Working Group recommended relocating 3-K and pre-K classes to nearby Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) with empty seats and establishing multisession



models, or staggered schedules, at more schools—other recommendations which will have tradeoffs for our families.

## **Staffing**

NYCPS currently employs nearly 77,000 teachers, the largest teacher workforce in the nation, greater than the entire public school teacher workforce in more than 37 states. We estimate that under the new law, we will require an additional 10–12,000 teachers, over 3,000 of whom will need to be special education teachers. The Independent Budget Office’s (IBO) estimates are even higher, at 17,700 new teachers.

We are looking into how to strengthen our teacher pipeline to meet this need, including considering the continuation and expansion of successful alternative certification programs, as well as working with NYSED in developing new, high-quality preparation pathways that are lower cost for participants.

The Working Group also made several recommendations on staffing, such as reviewing our recruitment and pipeline programs like the NYC Teaching Collaborative and Teaching Fellows, expanding opportunities for paraprofessionals and building relationships between traditional teacher education programs and priority districts to better align with our hiring needs, early hiring windows in high-need schools with class size needs, financial incentives for recruiting and retaining teachers in our harder to staff districts and evaluating the potential impact of the law on ongoing efforts to recruit more teachers who reflect our student body.

We already hire 4,000–4,500 teachers each year just to keep up with attrition. And both nationally and locally, fewer teachers than ever are entering the profession. In certain teacher license areas, such as STEM, bilingual, foreign language, CTE, and special education, particularly in secondary grades, the hiring pool is small, limiting our overall choice of who to hire. We will need to strengthen our pipeline in these license areas to meet the mandate, especially in the later years of the plan.

## **Cost**

We estimate the cost of hiring these new teachers to be between \$1.4 and \$1.9 billion in new expense costs annually, depending on how we distribute the funding. The IBO’s estimates range from \$1.6 to \$1.9 billion. These costs vary depending on some of the policy decisions we make, especially around enrollment, and we look forward to working with our communities to make these policy decisions.

To address some of the cost, the Working Group recommended directing existing State Contracts for Excellence funding to class size reduction rather than other purposes, as well as advocating for new funding from New York State. Earlier this month, the Chancellor and I were in Albany, advocating for additional resources for our schools that would help us meet this new mandate.



I want to be very clear: this additional funding is not yet in our budget, and we have not identified a funding source. New York State provided additional Foundation Aid to us in FY 2022, 2023, and 2024. This funding has *already* been deployed, and is in our schools right now. We used this to raise the Fair Student Funding floor for all schools from 90% FSF in FY 2021 to 100% beginning in FY 2022, distribute over \$215 million in State funding to school budgets this year to be used consistent with the state Contracts for Excellence legislation, create brand new Fair Student Funding weights for Students in Temporary Housing and schools with concentrations of high-need students, and to help address rising mandated costs such as charter schools and special education. Without this funding, fewer of our classes would be below the newly mandated caps today, and we would have much more work to do.

## Equity

On equity, New York City is a national leader in terms of equitable funding for our schools; Our existing funding formula, Fair Student Funding, directs the most resources to our highest-need schools and students. This year, with the help of many of you and our Fair Student Funding Working Group, we made our formula even more equitable, adding funding for students in temporary housing and schools with high concentrations of students in need. Our data shows that 62% of classes in our schools with the highest rates of economic need are already below the newly mandated caps. This compares with just 25% of classes in schools with the lowest rates of economic need. A variety of independent organizations, including the IBO, the national Urban Institute think tank, and the news organization Chalkbeat have found similar trends.

This means that our lowest-need schools will require the most resources—money, teachers, and space—to comply with this new mandate. Overall, these schools will receive roughly twice the amount of new funding per student under this law as our highest-need schools. This compares to today’s funding model, where our highest-need schools get about 30% *more* than our lowest-need schools. We see similar trends for capital as well, in terms of which communities will see new investments.

We are also concerned about equity as we think about teacher distribution across our system. Our data shows that teaching positions in lower-poverty schools are often filled by teachers transferring in from higher-poverty schools within our system.

The Working Group recommended staff pay differentials and an earlier application window for higher-need schools. We are dedicated to finding a way to implement the new mandate without setting up a transfer of experienced talent away from high-poverty schools, and are working with the UFT and CSA on how to make sure we can prioritize equity while implementing the newly mandated class size caps.

## Proposed Legislation

I will now briefly address the proposed legislation. Intro 45 amends current local laws related to



the existing class size report and the report on the demographics of students. For the class size report, the law aligns the requirements more closely to the State's reporting requirements. It also updates the requirements of the diversity report. We want to continue to provide a preliminary report of a given school year on November 15<sup>th</sup> with an opportunity to refresh that data on February 15<sup>th</sup>. We support this bill and appreciate efforts to align reporting between the city and state.

## Next Steps & Conclusion

We are planning for next year, and as required by the law, are collaborating with the UFT and CSA on the next iteration of the Class Size Reduction Plan, which we expect to be delivered to the State Education Department sometime this summer. I want to thank our union partners for conversations on some of the questions left open by the law, and planning for the future.

We anticipate some policy shifts will be required to maintain compliance next year. We are considering, for example, placing new restrictions on the use of Contracts for Excellence funding as recommended by the Working Group, asking schools to prioritize hiring teachers over other positions, and asking Superintendents to work with Principals to ensure our compliance levels improve through a variety of options. All of these final decisions will be made with UFT and CSA, as the law requires. Our goal is to communicate those to schools this spring, so our system can be on the same page as we begin planning for the fall.

The task before us is substantial, and the considerations and tradeoffs ahead are many, but we are committed to continuing to comply with this law in the coming years. I want to thank you all again for your advocacy on behalf of New York City Public Schools and of your communities. Together, I know we can meet the needs of all our students. I look forward to answering any questions that you all may have.



**NYC Public Schools Class Sizes  
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*Testimony of Khalek Kirkland, District 23 Superintendent, NYCPS*

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph and all the members of the City Council Committee on Education here today. My name is Khalek Kirkland and I am the proud Superintendent for District 23 located in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. I want to thank Chair Joseph and the Council for your continued advocacy for the students of New York City.

I want to start by telling you a bit about myself and the path that lead me to stand before you today. I started as a middle school math teacher at Middle School 113 in District 13, before becoming an assistant principal and ultimately, a principal at this same school. I served as principal in the Bronx before coming to serve the community of District 23. I strongly believe in the benefits of smaller class sizes. When scholars are in smaller classes, they can receive personalized instruction unique to that scholar, an approach not always conducive in larger classrooms. That attention to detail for students is key to academic excellence for our young scholars. While I believe the law has some worthy goals, there will be some implementation challenges for schools. I say this as a superintendent whose district is not only complying with the law, but, as Deputy Chancellor Vadehra mentioned in her testimony, has 73% of our classes under the newly mandated caps.

However, in the coming years, as we continue to comply with these caps, our principals will be forced to make some difficult decisions when it comes to how they use their budgets. I work extensively with our district budgeting director, reviewing spending regularly. I understand why our principals make the choices they make in our district to ultimately provide an enriching experience for our scholars and school community. Many of the decisions principals make today as they look at their respective budgets will need to take a back seat to ensure 100% compliance with the law.

Our principals will have a tough choice: how do we continue to comply with the law while ensuring robust coursework for our students. If building expansion is not a current option, principals will have to rethink space and how they schedule classes based on room availability, ultimately causing an impact on how classrooms are utilized. In our schools, we create a welcoming environment the moment our young scholars step foot in our buildings. Our teachers create spaces that are literacy-rich, utilizing visual aids, progress trackers, and classroom libraries. As we continue to meet the class size law, my schools will need to develop alternatives to maintain these vital tools across multiple classrooms. Students moving through different rooms during the school day will introduce new challenges for our young students, who would lose out on the welcoming spaces our teachers create. Movement between classrooms will also result in a loss of instructional time, particularly for co-located schools vying to use additional space. Very few buildings in my district host solely one school, meaning many of our students will be impacted and lose vital time in the classroom.



We have talented teachers in our district and I'm deeply proud of the work they do every day. However, the current reality is we still face challenges with hiring teachers to come teach at our schools, and down the line, this law may exacerbate the issue. Our district is the most compliant in the city. That means, as the NYCPS works to direct resources to reduce class sizes in places that have higher class sizes, those resources will not be coming to my district, they will be going to places with much lower compliance rates than ours. We already face challenges in recruiting teachers to teach in our district.

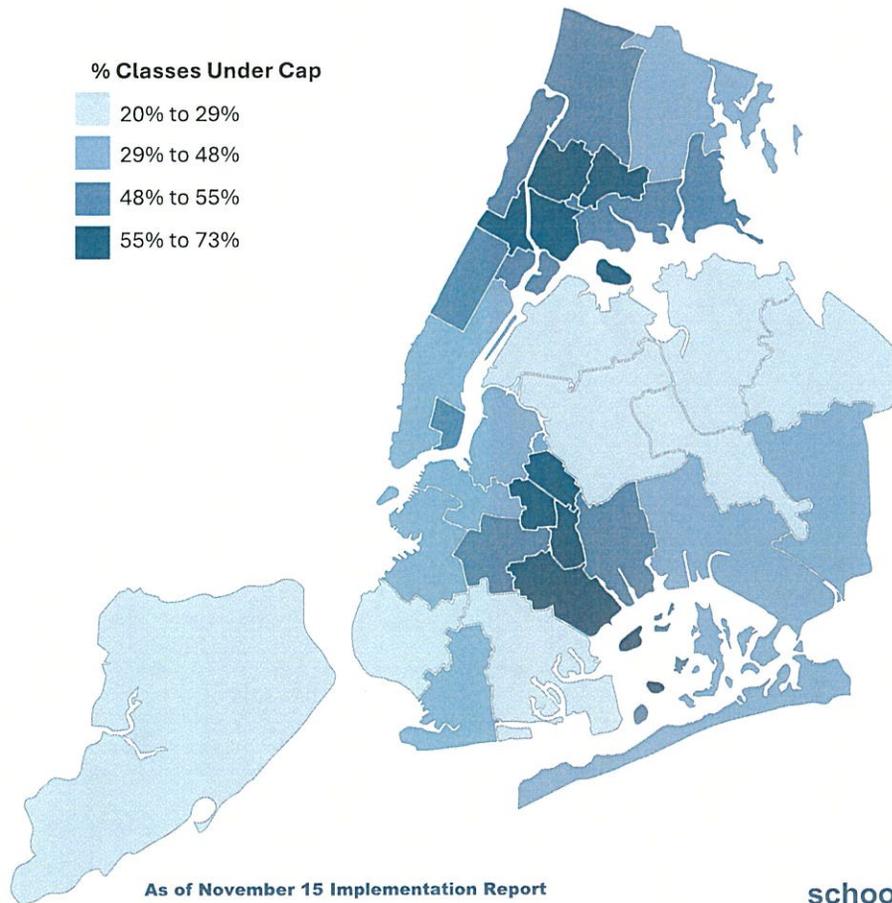
As schools in lower poverty districts open up more teacher positions, we anticipate that teachers will be more likely to move to those districts and potentially away from our districts. NYCPS data shows that teachers tend to move from higher poverty schools to lower poverty schools as they move within schools in the system. This law, and the need to hire more teachers in our less compliant districts, while well-intentioned, only hurts our students even more. There will be no small class sizes if we don't have a high-quality teacher in the front of the class. I look forward to engaging with the Council on developing pathways to incentivize teachers to teach in communities like mine in Brownsville.

Under the current way the city funds schools, Fair Student Funding, schools in my community get additional dollars for serving high-need students. With the changes that may come as we comply with the class size law, where the requirements – which will drive resources -- are the same across the city, I am concerned my district may lose out, with resources instead going to other districts which have many fewer classes under the newly mandated caps. I hope that the scholars of District 23, who have already begun to see the positive impact of this funding model in our classrooms, do not lose the money, the teachers, and the investments that they deserve. The City and the State must ensure schools and communities like mine continue to keep – and in fact grow – their resources in the face of this law. The scholars in my district require this support.

Finally, we are committed to ensuring that NYC students have access to a high-quality education while complying with the state's class size law. We will continue to prepare for the upcoming challenges facing our schools in the coming school years and will actively look toward creative ways to lessen the impact on student academic excellence in an approach that is equitable and thoughtful. When we lift all small boats, all students can achieve. We greatly appreciate our partnership with City Council and look forward to continued collaboration to enhance the education experience of our students. Thank you for your time.

# Current State: Appx. 40% of Classes Are At or Below Caps

District		% of Classes Under Caps
Manhattan	01	50%
	02	42%
	03	49%
	04	53%
	05	57%
	06	49%
Bronx	07	68%
	08	49%
	09	62%
	10	51%
	11	41%
	12	63%
Brooklyn	13	44%
	14	47%
	15	42%
	16	67%
	17	53%
	18	58%
	19	49%
	20	27%
	21	31%
	22	25%
Queens	23	73%
	24	28%
	25	25%
	26	20%
	27	30%
	28	23%
	29	32%
Staten Island	30	28%
	31	24%
Brooklyn	32	60%



Data shows the districts with the greatest percentage of classes at or below the class size caps are in districts:

- **23** Ocean Hill, Brownsville,
- **7** Mott Haven, Melrose, and
- **16** Stuyvesant Heights, Crown Heights.

The lowest percentage of classes at or below the class size caps are in districts:

- **26** Bayside, Glen Oaks,
- **28** Forest Hills, Jamaica Hills, and
- **31** Staten Island.

# Schools With Classroom Needs

We estimate **over 500 schools** across the entire City which will need more classrooms than they currently have.

Some of these schools need just a few classrooms (smaller dots), **while others need a substantial number of classrooms** (bigger dots).

**The largest areas of need are in Southern Brooklyn, Northeast Queens, Manhattan, and Staten Island.**



# Additional Expense Dollars Needed By District

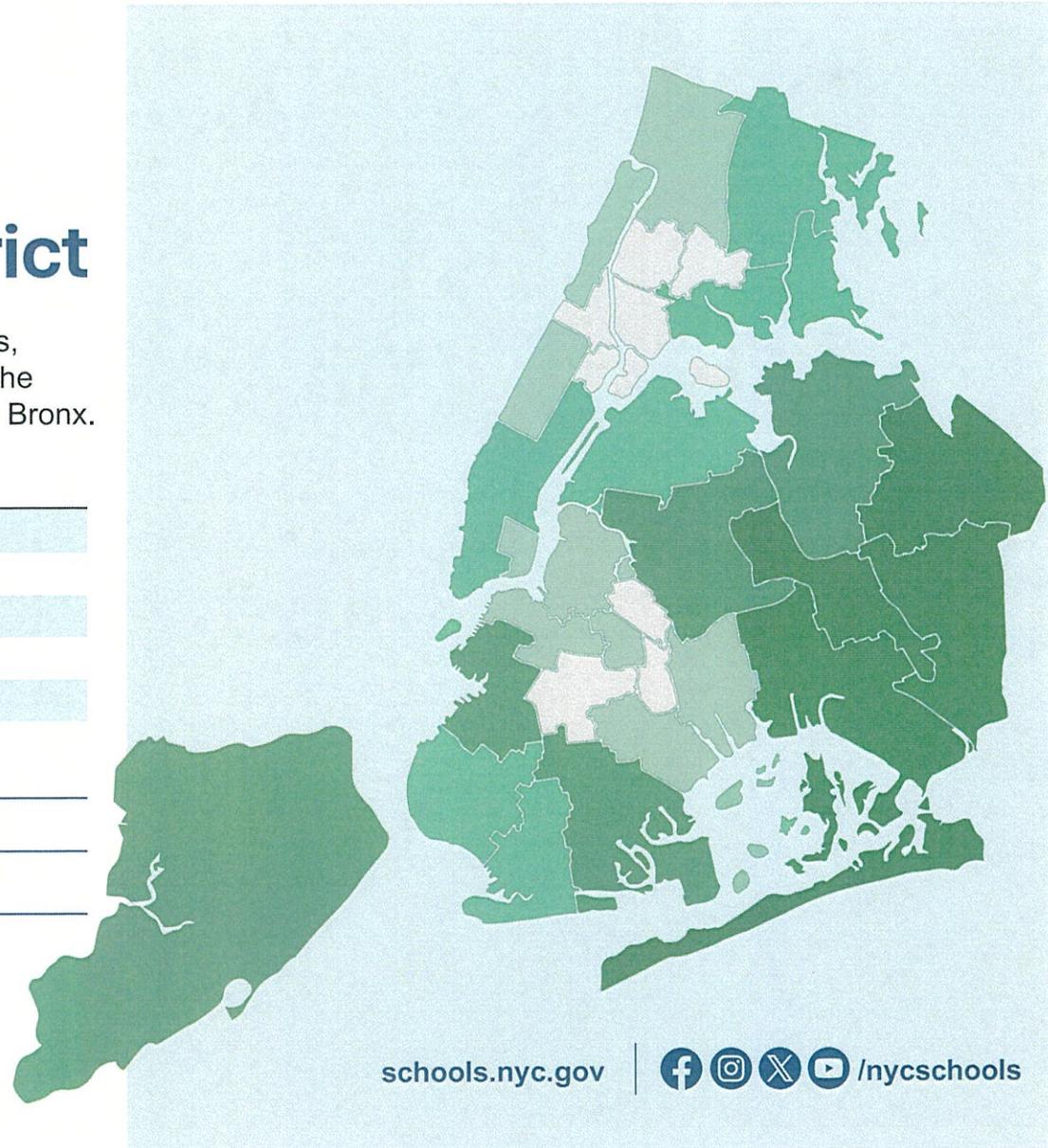
The districts that get the most funding are in eastern Queens, southern Brooklyn, and Staten Island. The districts that get the least funding are in central Brooklyn, Harlem, and the South Bronx.

Districtwide per Student Funding	Districts
\$2,400 - \$2,799	26, 27, 28, 29
\$2,000 - \$2,399	15, 22, 24, 25, 31
\$1,600 - \$1,999	2, 8, 11, 20, 21, 30
\$1,200 - \$1,599	1, 3, 6, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19
\$800 - \$1,199	4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 17, 23, 32

## Per Student Funding by Need

Lowest-Need Quartile of Schools:	\$2,427 per student
Highest-Need Quartile of Schools:	\$1,255 per student

**Comparison:** Highest need schools receive 48% less than lowest need

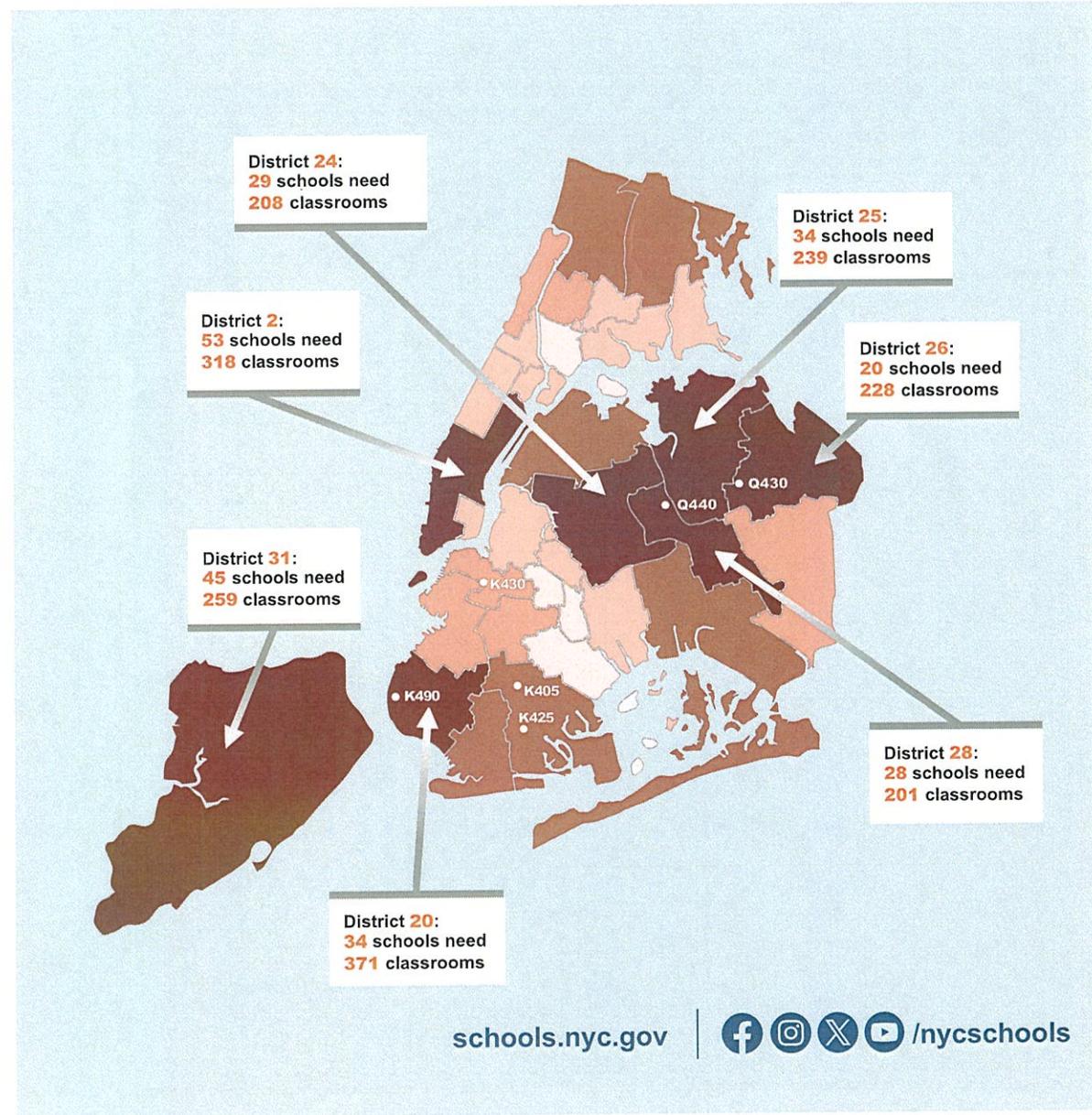


# Classroom Needs By NYC District

# of Classrooms Needed by District	Districts
200 - 371 Classrooms	2, 20, 24, 25, 26, 28, 31
100 - 199 Classrooms	10, 11, 21, 22, 27, 30
50 - 99 Classrooms	6, 9, 13, 15, 17, 29
10 - 49 Classrooms	1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 14, 19, 32
1 - 9 Classrooms	7, 16, 18, 23

## Schools With Need of More Than 50 Classrooms

School ID	School Name	Grade Level	# of CRs Needed
K490	Fort Hamilton High School	HS	78
Q430	Francis Lewis High School	HS	78
K425	James Madison High School	HS	65
K405	Midwood High School	HS	60
Q440	Forest Hills High School	HS	60
K430	Brooklyn Technical High School	HS	55



**TESTIMONY**

**NYC COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
CHAIR, RITA JOSEPH**

*Oversight - Implementing the State Class Size Law in New York City*

**Presented on  
Thursday, February 29, 2024**



**The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators  
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Thank you, Speaker Adams, and distinguished members of the City Council, for holding this incredibly important hearing on the implementation of the state's new class size law.

As you know, the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators represents over 17,000 in-service and retired Principals, Assistant Principals, Educational Administrators, Supervisors, as well as Directors and Assistant Directors of Early Childhood Centers. We submit this testimony on their behalf.

We believe in smaller class sizes. School leaders know firsthand the positive effects that smaller classes can have on students. Anyone who has ever stepped foot in a classroom can understand how fewer students often results in more individual attention and feedback for each, better communication and connection between teachers and students, and more meaningful participation in lessons. Studies demonstrate how students perform better and demonstrate more growth in smaller classes, which is why the state legislature passed this law in the first place.

However, from the inception of the class size law, we have been steadfast in our position that the class size law must be implemented in a responsible manner. We must begin any conversation about this law by acknowledging that, despite best intentions, there are critical challenges to address so that the law's current mandates do not harm school communities more than help them. We have been strongly advocating for this hearing to make students, parents, policy makers, elected officials, and the public aware of all the barriers that must be addressed for school leaders to comply with the law as well as the unintended consequences that schools may experience. We hope today's hearing is the start of a much-needed conversation on how we can come together to reduce class size. Many school leaders have shared substantial concerns with us that the lack of adequate funding for additional teachers and/or the absence of space makes it incredibly challenging for their schools to comply with the class size legislation. If additional funding is not provided to help their schools meet the new class size limits, school leaders may be forced to eliminate existing programs, reduce their enrollment, and/or alter how they utilize spaces.

### **SPACE**

The Department of Education has been transparent that while some schools are well-positioned to comply with the new class size legislation without any complications, there are many schools that have no capacity to expand and no additional space for new construction, and therefore, some school districts would require new school buildings to adhere to the class size requirements.

We all know there are schools that are already beyond the 100 percent utilization rate, with no space to create one additional class, let alone many classes. Our principals substantiated that point themselves after CSA strongly advocated that the DOE undertake a comprehensive survey of principals to validate their school level data and the assumptions that are guiding their plans. We believe that it is always necessary to consult directly with principals to verify assumptions

about their buildings and programming, and, to their credit, the DOE recently conducted a survey to do so.

Previously, the DOE had been relying on a tool known as the PASS survey to determine whether a school had adequate space to comply with the law. The PASS survey is an annual requirement for principals to detail the spatial composition of their buildings, including classroom and administrative areas, and provide a comprehensive layout of their schools. We had concerns that the data collected from the PASS survey could misrepresent the actual conditions within some school buildings. For example, if a PASS survey indicates that a school has four half classrooms, the DOE might infer from their data that these are equivalent to two full classrooms. However, this might not be true when you consider the specific locations of these spaces.

Similarly, we believe the DOE should not assume that they can seamlessly convert administrative spaces into instructional areas. The DOE must consult with school leaders whether any changes to school space are truly viable or if the spaces in question are unsuitable for instructional purposes. It is crucial to obtain the exact details of each space from the principals themselves. So, CSA fully supported principals in filling out the DOE's class size survey. This was an integral step in an ongoing process to identify the number of schools that will be unable to implement the new law in the coming years without additional resources and staffing, including teachers, supervisors, and support staff.

The DOE has recognized the necessity for building construction to properly implement the class size law. Soon after the state legislature passed this law, the DOE estimated that the capital cost of constructing new spaces or repurposing existing rooms would total approximately \$35 billion. However, there is no indication how we will pay for this construction. Additionally, constructing a school can take between three to five years, and the city has not yet identified sites for these new schools. There is existing construction work in various parts of the city, but much of that work began before the class size legislation. So, the locations of these construction projects do not necessarily align with the areas of need identified by the new law. We are already two years into the phase-in, and there is no clarity on how we will find adequate funding for these and other needs.

## **STAFFING**

The recent class-size survey focused not only on the space requirements but also on staffing needs. It prompted principals to provide input on their anticipated additional staffing requirements as the result of the new law. Principals had the opportunity to respond to the DOE's projections based on both their spatial configurations and their programming.

Concerns about staffing needs abound. The DOE initially projected the need for approximately 9,000 additional teachers to comply with the new mandates, but recent estimates have increased this number to between 10,000 and 12,000 and there are a multitude of reasons for this. For instance, in an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom in New York City, state law

mandates a 40:60 ratio of special needs students to general education students. So, a class of thirty students must consist of twelve students with special needs and eighteen general education students. With the new class size law, the school must split those twelve special needs students into two smaller groups. This class would need not one, but two additional teachers; each split class would need both a special education teacher and a general education teacher.

The DOE's projections may not fully incorporate the nuances of these special program requirements. Dual language programs and/or gifted and talented programs might similarly present unique challenges. It has been our goal to ensure that the DOE includes the insights and expertise of principals in their assessments to address these intricacies accurately and appropriately account for any anomalies.

There is an existing teacher shortage in high-need areas such as mathematics, science, special education, and bilingual education, raising significant concerns about whether the DOE can recruit the appropriate number of teachers in certain licenses to comply with the class size law. We must develop a strategy for addressing the shortages in challenging license areas and ensure that there is a clear and productive plan for recruiting the adequate number of qualified teachers into a pool for school leaders to hire from so they can meet the demands of the new law.

### **APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION**

The need for a substantial increase in the number of teachers, estimated to be between 10,000 to 12,000, will clearly result in the need for additional supervisors. Current school leaders, who are already operating under untenable demands and workloads, will be overwhelmed by additional evaluations, observations, and professional development responsibilities to train the significant increase in new teachers and paraprofessionals. We must ensure that the existing supervisory workforce is not further overstretched and burnt out. As the plan that the city submitted to NYSED suggests, we will continue to advocate for a proportional increase in supervisory support to maintain effective instruction and professional development for the anticipated influx of teachers. Otherwise, the academic gains from smaller class sizes may be eroded since the law necessitates hiring new teachers who may require more professional development and support due to their lack of experience.

### **FUNDING**

The state's Contracts for Excellence (C4E) funding provides schools with resources based on factors such as per capita enrollment and the demographic composition of the student body, including special needs students and those in temporary housing. As the class size law stands, the state does not offer schools any additional funding to comply with the new class size limits. Without a new or increased funding stream, schools will be forced to reallocate their existing monies to comply with the new staffing requirements and likely eliminate vital after-school tutoring, intervention, clubs, sports, arts, music, drama, STEM, robotics, and other

extracurricular programs or partnerships with community-based organizations. Schools use these funds to support students with the greatest needs, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students in poverty. Forcing schools to divert these funds would put the cost of reducing class sizes directly on schools themselves and would inevitably lead to a reduction of services and supports that our most vulnerable students need.

Some elected officials have suggested that sufficient funding has been provided to the DOE and that these funds are not being distributed properly. From the principals' perspective, this is a moot point. Our school leaders are faced with a fixed budget and external pressures that dictate how they must allocate funding. Given all the points we are calling out, requiring school leaders to reallocate funding to reduce their class sizes without an increase in their overall budget creates an unfunded mandate and an untenable situation for too many schools.

The city's Fair Student Funding Formula is a critical element of this discussion. We have maintained for years that this formula is inherently flawed. It has consistently disadvantaged certain schools, leaving them in a perpetual state of financial appeal simply to secure the resources needed for basic operation. The city's current formula was obviously constructed before the law, and the current construct assumes classes made up of thirty students.

The city must find new funding streams or increase Fair Student Funding to properly implement the new class size limits, otherwise too many schools may have a financial inability to provide the same level of programming. When schools enact the new caps, some will be forced to reduce enrollment which will lessen the FSF funding they receive. After reducing class sizes, the per-student funds may no longer be sufficient. For instance, a school with a third-grade class of thirty students may currently receive enough per-student funding for one teacher; however, when the new law limits third-grade classes to twenty students, the school's budget must suddenly fund two third-grade teachers. We must increase FSF to align with the new caps or too many schools will now become underfunded according to the city's own formula.

## EQUITY

The DOE has proposed redistribution of C4E funding from schools that already meet the class size requirements to those that cannot comply. This potential reallocation raises concerns around equity. Across the city, schools with the most significant overcrowding are often in more affluent neighborhoods with higher performing students. Conversely, in districts characterized by lower socioeconomic status, schools are more likely to already meet the class size requirements. Therefore, if additional resources are provided to schools experiencing overcrowding, there will be influx of additional teachers and new classroom space into neighborhoods and districts that are generally made up of families with higher socioeconomic status and with students that tend to perform better on state assessments.

Given this context, it seems reasonable to consider waivers that would permit schools that are currently successful, even with larger class sizes, to maintain their current sizes in the coming years and phase them into the new caps later. This approach might ensure that the reallocation

of funding does not widen the equity gap and inadvertently penalize lower-performing schools by reducing their already limited resources. We must formulate a strategy that supports all students and schools equitably, particularly those in dire need of both academic and financial support.

## **DISPLACEMENT**

As the DOE has shared, there are schools that are well-positioned to comply with the new class size legislation without any complications. However, in later years those schools will still face significant pressure to displace students to keep up with the class size caps. In other words, class size reduction will inevitably pose a risk of displacement for current and incoming students. Such displacement could force families, many of whom have chosen to live in a specific district or neighborhood, to accept classroom seats outside of their intended zone and/or travel to a less congested school outside their local school district.

The DOE has shared that they intend to avoid displacement as much as possible by building additional school space. However, we are concerned that there is not yet a plan to address this, including a clear strategy regarding the prioritization of students and handling of siblings. These are intricate issues that require transparent and timely communication to parents. School leaders must not be left alone to contend with their community's frustrations.

What if reducing class sizes causes an elementary school serving 1000 children to suddenly have enough space for only 700 children? First, since schools are funded based on their enrollment, the school will lose substantial funding. Second, where are the approximately 300 displaced students going? How will these displaced families, who expected to attend another school, be supported? How soon will the city build more seats within that district? Where will that capital funding come from? We worry that it is already late and have been raising the reality of these obstacles even before the state passed the class size law. Since it takes the city at least a couple of years on average to build a new school, concrete and comprehensive plans from the School Construction Authority should already be in place.

## **CONCLUSION**

We fully support the idea of smaller class sizes; however, without additional funding and space, the prescribed limits will inevitably lead to the displacement of students and severe program cuts. Neither the proposed city budget nor the state budget considers the school-level financial realities of the class size law. CSA will continue to unambiguously call out the truth that, under current circumstances, school leaders will be left without adequate resources to ensure a safe and high-quality education for all students and schools will be forced to abandon programming that families have come to rely on.

We must all clearly communicate how incredibly difficult the implementation of this new class size law is going to be and agree to a committed and responsible rollout aligned to the additional staffing and space available at every year of implementation. As New York City school leaders and administrators, we always stand ready and willing to provide and advocate that our students receive the highest-quality education they deserve.

Sincerely,

Henry Rubio  
CSA President

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**COMMITTEES**  
EDUCATION  
FINANCE  
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JUDICIARY  
RULES  
TRANSPORTATION

**February 29, 2024**

**State Senator John Liu testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Education Oversight Hearing on Implementing the State Class Size Law in New York City.**

Thank you Chair Joseph and members of the City Council Education Committee. My name is State Senator John Liu, and I serve as the Chair of the Senate's Committee on NYC Education. As the Senate sponsor of the class size legislation, I'm happy to be with you today and answer any questions you might have.

In 2022, the state legislature passed, and the Governor signed into law, legislation to mandate the City of New York reduce its class sizes to 20 students per class in kindergarten through third grade, 23 students in grades four through eight, and 25 students in high school classes.

The class size legislation never should have been necessary. In 1995, the Campaign for Fiscal Equity sued the State of New York claiming it was underfunding NYC schools. The state's highest court, the New York State Court of Appeals, ruled in favor of that claim, finding that reducing class sizes is fundamental to a sound, basic education.

It wasn't until 2007 that the state created Contracts for Excellence and Foundation Aid, which is the formula the State uses today to fund schools. As part of this contract, the DOE submitted a five-year plan to reduce class sizes to 20 in K-3, 23 in 4-8, and 25 in high school.

For nearly 20 years, NYC was delinquent in complying with the Campaign for Fiscal Equity ruling, but there was always a completely valid reason - the state never provided the Foundation Aid that was required to pay for lowering class sizes.

That all changed three years ago when Governor Hochul stepped up and committed, at long last, to fully funding Foundation Aid over a three-year period, and this year is actually the first year NYC schools finally have their full Foundation Aid.

Despite fully funding Foundation Aid, there has been a lot of discussion over the last two years about how we're going to pay for lower class sizes, and what the implications will be for the current system. There has been very little discussion, even in the five-year capital plan, about how we're going to use this new money and where we're going to build new schools.



Stakeholders continue to sound the alarm. There are fears that students in zoned and overcrowded schools may not be eligible to attend their zoned schools. There are fears about reductions to beloved programs like robotics, art, and AP courses.

Let me be clear: we built in a six year phase-in to the law so that such fears do not come to pass. We never would have passed this law if the Foundation Aid was not first fully funded.

After two years of reluctant hemming and hawing, I was heartened at Mayor Adams and Chancellor Banks most recent testimony in Albany this month when they both committed to complying with lowering class sizes in NYC schools.

The question now is how they will do it? When will they inform us of their plan? And where will they build the new schools? The answer to all these questions and fears is to build new schools, add expansions, maximize space. Every neighborhood across New York City has space for new schools. We have the funding to pay for it. It's time to get stuff done.



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

# Jumaane D. Williams

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**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS  
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
FEBRUARY 29, 2024**

Good afternoon,

My name is Jumaane D. Williams, and I am the Public Advocate for the City of New York. I would like to thank Chair Joseph members of the Committee on Education for holding this important hearing.

In 2022, the New York State Legislature passed a law requiring New York City to cap class sizes at 20 to 25 students, depending on the grade level, a change to be implemented by the year 2028. There is evidence that smaller class sizes are beneficial for students, especially for younger students and especially for students from marginalized and high-poverty communities<sup>12</sup>—who make up a majority of New York City students. Students who have smaller class sizes have better outcomes in every way that achievement can be measured, from higher test scores to better grades to high school graduation rates and rates of college attendance. With an influx of migrant students who likely need increased attention from teachers and school staff, reducing class sizes is more important than ever.

I want to acknowledge the fiscal concerns about the implementation of this law. According to an analysis by NYC's Independent Budget Office, the city will need to hire around 17,700 teachers in order to comply with class size reduction requirements,<sup>3</sup> during a time when the city is already struggling to retain high-quality teachers. It is, however, important to note that teachers overwhelmingly support this law, with the UFT steadfast in their support. There are numerous avenues that the city can explore to increase available funding for schools. Firstly, there are many schools that already have a high student-to-teacher ratio despite large class sizes, and these teachers and staff could be reassigned to other schools. In addition, the NYC Independent Budget Office is expected to end this fiscal year with a \$3.6 billion surplus,<sup>4</sup> and the city has a rainy day fund of over \$2 billion.

New York City and State should also reevaluate how it funds charter schools. Charter schools cost the city nearly \$3 billion per year, and costs are expected to increase in the following years.<sup>5</sup> NYC is the only district in the state that doesn't receive charter transitional aid, which is

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aft.org/position/class-size>

<sup>2</sup> <https://fremont.edu/5-benefits-of-smaller-classes/>

<sup>3</sup>

<https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/pressreleases/PRhow-would-the-new-limits-to-class-sizes-affect-new-york-city-schools-july-2023.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>

<https://ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/mind-the-gap-new-york-citys-economy-shows-resilience-while-inflation-cools-but-expenses-lead-budget-uncertainty-fiscal-outlook-december-2023.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A41rs9GCsj4>

designed to reimburse districts for part of the cost of charter school expansion—between 2011 and 2023, NYC lost out on \$2.81 billion in transitional aid, and will miss out on an additional estimated \$93 million in transitional aid during the current school year.<sup>6</sup> Further, NYC is the only school district in the state and the country required to help pay for charter school rent, and the state should exempt the city from having to do so. Lastly, NYC currently only receives 25 percent reimbursement for new school construction, and the state should increase this rate to 50 percent.

The city should also take efforts to level enrollment relative to school size, to ensure that schools with larger classes in more well-funded districts are not receiving disproportionate funding compared to schools with smaller class sizes in higher-need areas. In many cases, overcrowded schools sit near underutilized schools, however, the DOE has not equalized enrollment to allow overcrowded schools to lower class size. In addition to ensuring that underutilized schools have more adequate budgets and be able to provide more services and programs to their students, this will also require fewer new schools to be built.

Lastly, there will inevitably be a need for new infrastructure, not only for new buildings but for modifications to existing buildings (such as room dividers). Despite existing overcrowding and this class size reduction law, the new five-year capital plan reduces the number of new seats by half and cuts over \$2 billion compared to the current plan. The city can also take this as an opportunity to improve existing buildings that are inaccessible to students with disabilities—only one in three schools is currently accessible—and ensure that new buildings are fully accessible.

All students have a right to an adequate and equitable education, and I look forward to working with the administration on the implementation of this law.

Thank you.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://edlawcenter.org/it-is-time-for-new-york-city-schools-to-receive-charter-school-transition-aid/>



**Testimony of the United Federation of Teachers  
before the  
New York City Council Education Committee's Oversight Hearing on Implementing  
the State Class Size Law in New York City**

**February 29, 2024**

My name is Michael Sill, and I'm the assistant secretary of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). On behalf of the union's more than 190,000 members, I want to thank the New York City Council's Education Committee, especially Education Chair Rita Joseph, for holding today's public hearing on implementing the state class size law in New York City.

Lowering class sizes in New York City is not an experiment, a wish list, an "unfunded mandate" or even another expenditure competing for Department of Education (DOE) funding.

It is the law.

In 2022, Albany passed a law to reduce class sizes in all New York City classrooms by September of 2028, and the state is providing New York City with \$1.6 billion in new, recurring funding to help make it happen.

Once the additional funding was in place, the New York Legislature, in June 2022, overwhelmingly amended New York State's Contract for Excellence law by a vote of 59–4 in the State Senate and 147–2 in the Assembly to require that New York City implement a five-year class size reduction plan. On Sept. 8, 2022, Gov. Kathy Hochul signed the bill into law, with compliance requirements beginning in September 2023.

The law calls for class size caps to be achieved in 20% increments over five years starting with the 2023–24 school year, with caps of no more than 20 students per class in grades K–3, no more than 23 students per class in grades 4–8, and no more than 25 students per class in high school, with physical education and performing arts classes capped at 40 students per class.

Unfortunately, the DOE and City Hall are doing all they can to sabotage these changes and to avoid implementing this needed reform.

Our city's young people deserve better. They deserve the same class sizes that students across New York State already have. They deserve to be seen and to enjoy the academic, social and emotional benefits small classes have proven to provide.

One of the most powerful things you can say to a young person is simply, “I see you ... I see you for who you are, on your journey of self-discovery and self-realization. I see you and am willing and able to help you on that journey.”

Every teacher in New York City wants to say that to their students. The class size law makes that connection possible. It is what the class size law is about. If those of us who have power to make the law a reality — to say to our young people, “I see you” — if we are not doing everything we can to make that a reality — then shame on us. If anyone is making excuses for why this is not possible here, in the greatest city on Earth, when it is possible in upstate New York and Long Island, then shame on them.

The UFT has worked tirelessly to secure billions of dollars of new funding for public education through Foundation Aid to support these legally required class size limits, and Albany has done its part by, at long last, fulfilling the promise to fully fund Foundation Aid.

New York City now has additional funds to help provide smaller class sizes for optimal learning. That money came from the relentless advocacy of UFT members and is dedicated to our kids. Over and over again, we have heard from parents across the city that reducing class sizes is their highest priority and that they seek schools for their children with classes small enough that every child is seen and taught as an individual.

As the city seeks to rebuild its enrollment after the declines of recent years, keeping parents like these in the system by ensuring that our city’s schools have the small class sizes they’re looking for is essential. Yet over the last two years, the administration has plundered over \$1 billion in Foundation Aid, and it is undermining the education of the more than 300,000 students in Title I schools who are crammed into oversized classes.

Since coming into office, Mayor Adams has repeatedly cut school budgets despite more than \$1.6 billion in additional annual state aid provided to New York City schools as a result of the settlement of the CFE decision. Even worse, all of this was done in secret — with no discussion among the Panel for Educational Policy members. In public, the DOE has been using an alleged lack of funding as a reason for insisting that implementing the class size law will require unacceptable “tradeoffs” in our schools — telling school leaders, state officials and concerned parents that programs will be cut and enrollments slashed if they are required to comply. But after reviewing the city’s \$8 billion-plus in reserves, the higher-than-expected city revenues, the increase in state investment specifically for the equity of small classes and the more than \$1 billion in state funds earmarked for city asylum seekers that we are told is yet untapped — our position is that these claims of “fiscal austerity” are political rhetoric and not a fiscal reality.

What is worse, the DOE has made policy and spending decisions that are taking us in the wrong direction for compliance with these lower class sizes.

A recent UFT survey, which found that more than 322,000 students in Title I schools across every borough are in oversized classes, rebuts critics who claim the law will not help the city’s neediest students. The survey showed that 50% or more classes are larger than the law allows in

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nearly 700 Title I schools; overall, 97% of New York City's 1,267 Title I schools have at least one oversized classroom.

But as a result of the district's failure to take meaningful action toward implementing the law, average class sizes *increased* this year at all grade levels and for the second year in a row for elementary and middle schools. Given these current trends, it is increasingly possible that the DOE will not meet the mandate in the class size law next year that 40% of classes comply with the new caps and even less likely that they will achieve the mandates in years three to five.

The law also makes the New York City Department of Education responsible for building more classroom seats in congested neighborhoods, so no child is pushed out of their chosen school. But the mayor has proposed more than \$2 billion be cut from the new proposed five-year capital plan for school construction, which would likely make it more difficult for schools in the most overcrowded communities to lower class sizes.

The DOE is also using scare tactics around the cost of building these urgently required schools by releasing inflated estimated construction costs, which were based on the assumption that if a school had one student over capacity relative to the new class sizes, then an entire new school would need to be built at \$80 million per building. Let me say that again — you have a school that has a capacity for, say, 400 students. Back in 2021, there were 401 students enrolled in that school. The School Construction Authority (SCA) said that another school needs to be built. But it gets worse.

During one joint DOE-UFT-CSA meeting, SCA representatives said this methodology applied if two schools were over capacity in the same school building — in such a case, two new schools would have to be built. These inflated numbers are still being cited by opponents of the class size law's implementation, and the latest draft of the capital plan removed the required information about where new schools would be built, further worrying local parents seeking solutions for their students' overcrowded schools.

The capital plan should return to specifying where new schools are needed to create the space to lower class size and should fully fund all those schools. And one thing is for sure: With space at a premium, the city must stop co-locating charter schools in public school buildings.

The Class Size Working Group of educators, parents, education advocates and others, which Chancellor David C. Banks convened in March, submitted a report on Dec. 11 that offered more than 50 practical and actionable recommendations that would enable the DOE to lower class sizes to the mandated levels starting next year and beyond.

One is to support schools that have already met the class-size benchmarks (partially or fully) with the necessary resources, including financial, to maintain them so “that there is not a revolving door of schools in compliance.” Another is that the DOE and the SCA should recognize the need for more school space, develop a plan to repurpose and maximize existing space and implement better strategies to identify sites for new schools.

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The Working Group also developed strong recommendations around the process of building a pipeline of qualified and diverse educators to ensure that we have the teachers our city needs to staff these smaller classes.

We share the Working Group's emphasis on the need to begin this process immediately, collaborating with CUNY, SUNY, and other universities to recruit and train a cohort of future educators ready to effectively support students from Day 1.

We urge the DOE to follow up on the opportunities the Working Group cited to tap into increased federal funding for teacher apprenticeship and residency programs and to strengthen and fund pathways into teaching for the paraprofessionals and substitute teachers who are already serving in our city's classrooms. Professional learning and mentorship for these new teachers will be essential if we are also going to improve the rates of teacher retention in the city and avoid a revolving door of new hires. Great educators are developed, not born, and the district must ensure that we do not lose both promising new recruits and experienced educators just at the moment we need them the most to ensure that the benefits of small class sizes are realized.

The mayor and the DOE must stop treating the law as if it were optional. Given the intransigence of the administration, the State Education Department has already been compelled to briefly withhold state funds and direct the city to conduct a more comprehensive analysis to determine which physical space and budgetary needs to prioritize. This mirrors our reaction that the city's initial class size plan was missing a strategy for implementation and a targeted proposal for where and when new seats should be built.

Starting now, the DOE must redouble its efforts to implement the law for the benefit of the city's children, educators and communities. The United Federation of Teachers asks the City Council to join us in calling on the mayor and the chancellor to refrain from cutting school budgets or the capital plan and instead to increase their funding. We urge them to adopt the Class Size Working Group's proposals as soon as possible, which will ensure that schools are able to lower class sizes to the levels required by the law.

We are asking the City Council to join us in ensuring that New York City follows the law, so our city's students receive the smaller class sizes and quality education they are entitled to under our state's Constitution.

**In particular, we urge the City Council to join us in calling for the DOE and Mayor Adams to immediately take the following steps toward implementation of the class size law:**

- **Provide additional funding from the city's surplus revenue and reserves to ensure that schools do not experience program cuts as a result of the implementation of the new class size law, including by ensuring that schools that are currently in compliance with the new class size limits are given the funding needed to stay in compliance.**
- **Act on the recommendations of the Class Size Working Group, especially around capital planning for new schools. This must include restoring and increasing the**

**funding for new seats in the current capital plan and in the release of information regarding where new seats will be located.**

- **Dedicate additional funding to recruiting and retaining a pipeline of new teachers for city schools, including collaboration with CUNY and SUNY, with a particular focus on ensuring that our current paraprofessionals and substitute teachers who want to become full-time classroom teachers are given the support they need to do so.**
- **Identify high-need schools that currently have the space to offer students small classes and, as the law requires, prioritize these schools for implementation.**

To be sure, giving New York City children smaller class sizes — which their peers across the state already enjoy — is not an inexpensive or easy undertaking. It requires additional teachers, classroom space (including new construction), and intensive planning and monitoring.

We do not dispute there are other needs in city schools as well. But smaller class sizes have been a top priority for New York City parents and educators for decades. The new universal standard for class size in all New York City public schools, enshrined in the law, will yield dividends for our city's children for generations to come.



# Bronx Science Foundation, Inc.

Thursday, February 29, 2024

FOR THE RECORD

New York City Council  
Committee on Education  
Oversight Hearing on

Implementing the State Class Size Law in New York City

Written Testimony  
of the  
Bronx Science Foundation, Inc.  
Eleanor L. Coufos, President

On behalf of the alumni of the Bronx High School of Science, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony at the New York City Council's oversight hearing on the State's class size law. The Bronx Science Foundation is a non-profit whose mission is to increase opportunities for students through improved funding, access to resources and generally, to expand student horizons. We raise money for specific facilities, curricular enhancements and experiential education programs to enhance the learning experience at the school.

The issue of class size is important to us. While there is copious research that shows smaller class sizes can help improve academic performance, we are concerned about the potential unintended consequences of the class size law and how it will impact high performing schools like the Bronx High School of Science.

New York City has a number of high performing high schools. The students at these schools have high graduation rates, they have low rates of absences and they exceed State benchmarks for performance on state exams. High Schools with a long, proven history of academic success, especially schools with high attendance rates and no additional capacity, should be granted a specific exemption from the class size reduction mandates and any additional funds intended for that purpose should be distributed in that school district to help nearby underperforming schools.

Using the factors of high graduation rates, low rates of absences and exceeding State benchmarks for performance on state exams, the DOE should automatically offer such schools an exemption for the State class size mandate. New York City's specialized high schools in particular require an exemption. To reduce the total number of students at each of these schools is untenable since there is broad consensus that there should be more opportunities for seats at specialized high schools, rather than fewer. These schools offer a broad array of elective classes and advanced academics that match the ability of the students, reducing the size of these classes does not have a pedagogical basis. Moreover, limiting opportunities for these students puts them at a disadvantage in the college admissions process where advanced high school course work is expected. The intent of this law is not to hurt the academic opportunity of any student but rather to move resources to those who need it.

Using the Bronx High School of Science as an example, here is how the class size mandate will have a negative impact using sophomore Social Studies, a class all students must take:

- There are 750 students in a grade and teachers currently teach five Social Studies classes, each of 34 students



## Bronx Science Foundation, Inc.

- Under the current framework, there are 22 sections of sophomore Social Studies, requiring the equivalent of 4 teachers plus two classes
- With the new mandate, there will be 30 sections of sophomore Social Studies, requiring the equivalent of 6 teachers.
- Those EIGHT additional sections will displace the offering of EIGHT advanced Social Studies classes due to not having sufficient teachers or classrooms to offer them – an academically devastating blow to students and families.
- ***Extrapolating this to every grade, that is an additional 32 sections, replacing 32 electives, reducing opportunities for more than 1,000 students in Social Studies alone.***
- If we extrapolate this across all subjects and all grades, the impact is severe.

Looking more broadly at the school, the class size mandate will restrict the school to offering only the five required subjects: English, Math, Social Studies, Science and World Language plus requirements such as physical education, art, music and health. The school won't have enough teachers or classrooms to run additional electives. Foundational classes such as Intro to Coding, Research Literacy and Intro to Engineering would all be eliminated – vital courses for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. Currently, Advanced Placement Science classes are taught for ten periods a week – the school would have to reduce instruction time as it would be unable to provide those extra periods. All of this will have a significant impact on the school's academic offerings and risk it eroding as a high performing school as students will be less engaged.

As alumni, attending Bronx Science was a transformative aspect of our educations. We embraced the rigorous coursework and opportunities to challenge ourselves. Our academic opportunities were defined by the advanced electives we were able to take which positioned us for professional success. We cannot lose our advanced electives as a school, it would irreparably change the character of the school and prevent the school from accomplishing its mission of providing opportunities that match the demonstrated skill and desire of the students.

Solving for space, by building the school an extension, is only part of the problem as to continue the same academic offerings would require an investment of about 40 more teachers, already challenging enough to find strong teachers in advanced STEM subjects.

The State mandate was instituted to give struggling students a chance to succeed. The effort should be applauded. What broad, overreaching laws fail to do is to identify those instances where implementing the law would actually restrain progress that has already been made at the individual school level. Under the current law, all students and all schools are thought to be underperforming. This premise is false, considering the schools which fit the criteria above.

We ask for a permanent exemption to the class size mandate to be applied to high performing schools with a high attendance rate and that are already at or over capacity, such as the Bronx High School of Science.

I am happy to discuss this further and can be reached at [coufos@bxscience.edu](mailto:coufos@bxscience.edu).



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## **Testimony Regarding the Implementation of Class Size Law in New York City**

March 4, 2024

To the Committee on Education:

My name is Molly Senack, and I work for the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) as their Education and Employment Community Organizer.

In theory, smaller class sizes in NYC public schools would be an overall benefit for students and teachers for many reasons: individual students would get more attention; classroom management would be easier; students with disabilities, who might need additional support to learn effectively or might struggle to be heard, would be more likely to get what they need; and more teachers might stay in the job and more young people might be likely to become teachers, reducing job stress, and thus easing the current teacher shortages.

It would seem that smaller classes are ideal for ensuring that students with disabilities get the education they are entitled to under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and would ameliorate many of the issues faced by students with disabilities in the NYC Public School System. But in practice, if appropriate protective measures are not taken, reducing class sizes by the mandated 20% will exacerbate many of the issues faced by students with disabilities including the lack of accessible classrooms and shortages of special education teachers, along with issues that stem from them: disruptions in receiving related services (and backlogs in receiving compensatory ones), poor enough travel conditions on yellow buses that a complaint was filed with the Office of Civil Rights, and reduced access to mental health programs.

Throughout the official report on class size mandate implementation recommendations released by the Chancellor Bank's appointed Class Size Working Group, emphasis is placed on prioritizing students with disabilities: ensuring there is "adequate space" for them in schools, that their programs are not cut, that teachers are motivated to enter the field of special education, and that they are not forced to attend schools further away from home. These goals are achievable by recognizing that they must work in conjunction with other improvements to the education system.

For example, the Class Size Working Group report stresses the importance of utilizing and maximizing existing classroom space. However, according to the 2023 Advocates for Children (AFC) Report, *Access Denied*, less than one third of the public schools in NYC are considered fully accessible; so roughly 69% of NYC public schools are exclusionary to students with certain disabilities. This limits the way students can enroll in schools now and will limit the way their enrollment can be shuffled based on class size reductions. AFC recommends that the 2025-2029 capital plan include \$1.25 billion to address this and make 50% of schools fully accessible by 2029. While that sounds like a lot of money (the proposed capital budget only includes \$800 allocated to address this issue), it fulfills one of the Working Group's main recommendations of maximizing existing space, which according to them, could save potentially billions of dollars in new construction.

Making more schools physically accessible will also address another Working Group recommendation: ensuring that students are not forced to attend school far from their home district. Approximately 43% of students who take yellow buses in NYC have a disability, and despite there being limits on how much time a pupil is allowed to spend on a school bus (90 minutes within their borough and 115 minutes if leaving their borough), their time spent on a bus can, and often does, exceed that. This is due in part to being restricted when it comes to which schools they are able to attend. A greater number of accessible schools will make it more likely these students will be able to attend a school closer to home, meaning less time spent on a bus and less class time missed.

The Working Group also emphasizes the importance of hiring more staff to accommodate the increase in number of classrooms that reducing class size necessitates. Though the estimates differ slightly between the Department of Education and the Comptroller's office, the general estimate is that an additional 10,000-12,000 teachers will need to be hired, at a cost of \$1.4-1.9 billion, to fulfill the mandate. Staffing shortages, particularly when it comes to special education and related services, are a problem that NYC has faced for decades. NYC public school data reveals that in 2022 less than three applications were received per open special education position.

The lack of adequate staffing contributes the backlog in the Individualized Education Program (IEP, a plan that schools are required by law to implement to address the needs of a student who requires services or accommodations after the student has been evaluated by qualified professionals). This has already cost the City over \$25 million in audits alone. Additionally, during the 2022 fiscal year, the City spent almost \$1 billion on Carter Cases- providing families with private school tuition because public schools were deemed unable to provide their children with necessary services. The recommendations put forth in the Working Group's report to incentivize hiring in the field of special education- which include expanding both recruitment and mentorship programs, student loan repayment, and higher salaries- will naturally address these shortages, because the shortages were not created by the mandate. The issue across NYC public schools isn't that there aren't enough teachers per classroom, it's that there aren't enough teachers per student.

Implementing the class size mandates has the potential to make real improvements for public school students with disabilities in NYC. However, that is only true if the mandates are implemented in conjunction with addressing larger barriers these students face in the NYC school system. Otherwise, these mandates will reduce class size to the detriment of the very students they are intended to help.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Molly Senack (She/Her)  
Education and Employment Community Organizer  
Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York  
Email: [msenack@cidny.org](mailto:msenack@cidny.org) Phone: (917)-415-3154



**New York City Council**  
**Implementing the State Class Size Law Hearing**  
**Submitted Testimony prepared by Dante Bravo, Senior Policy Analyst**

**Thursday, February 29, 2024**

My name is Dante Bravo and on behalf of Children's Aid, I would like to thank Chair Rita Joseph and the members of the Committee on Education for the opportunity to submit testimony on the implementation of the State Class Size Law in New York City.

For nearly 170 years, Children's Aid has been committed to ensuring that there are no limits to a young person's aspirations. We have constructed a continuum of services for young people that fosters well-being and allows them to succeed and thrive in every milestone of life. Today, our 2,000 full- and part-time staff members empower nearly 50,000 children, youth, and families through our network of 40 locations including early childhood education centers, public schools, community centers, NYCHA facilities, and community health clinics in four New York City neighborhoods – Harlem, Washington Heights, the South Bronx, and the north shore of Staten Island.

First, we want to recognize the work and advocacy that has brought us to this point. Children's Aid celebrates this milestone in the implementation of the Class Size law, and acknowledges this as an important step in ensuring high quality education for all young people in New York State.

At the same time, Children's Aid submits this written testimony to highlight an issue that may not have been evident when the bill was debated by the New York State Assembly and Senate, and that we hope gains consideration as the City implements this state law. In short, we are concerned about the potential unintended consequences and their impact on community based organizations (CBOs) to be able to continue to serve communities at the levels they deserve.

**This testimony seeks to highlight the specific needs of these programs so that the City can continue to provide space for these services in New York City Public School buildings as they continue to plan out the implementation of the Class Size law.** The following are state and city funded initiatives in which Children's Aid is contractually obligated to provide these services during the school day within specific physical space parameters to ensure the maximum quality of services for youth and families.

**Community Schools**

For over 25 years, Children's Aid has operated community schools in partnership with the New York City Public School System. Community schools act as community hubs that offer holistic, integrated services that organize the school around student success and the needs of the whole child. At our community schools, we work with the school community to integrate expanded learning programs, comprehensive health services (physical, behavioral health, dental, and vision), and family engagement strategies into the school building.



Currently, Children's Aid partners with 20 community schools in New York City. Children's Aid community schools provide programs and services across four domains: academic, social-emotional, health and wellness, and family and home. These programs and services include afterschool programming, attendance support, school-based health clinics with medical, dental, and vision services, behavioral health services and counseling, parent workshops, family events, and many others. Children's Aid as the lead partner coordinates the programs and school strategy at the school level; advocates for the students' and school's needs; brings in additional resources, programs, and services; conducts needs assessments and supports data-driven decision making; and has a full-time presence in the school.

Children's Aid provides every one of our schools with a full-time Community School Director (CSD) to coordinate with school leadership and ensure resources, programming, and services are integrated, both during the school day and during extended learning time. CSDs often need dedicated space for administrative tasks, and to be able to offer onsite services that are most accessible to the school community (e.g. food pantries, parent/caregiver workshops, targeted academic interventions, and more).

This incredible work is not possible without dedicated space within our school partners' buildings, which could be at risk if a school needs to provide space to enact the smaller class sizes as required by state law. Community School partner CBOs physically occupy space at DOE schools; it is how Children's Aid staff address specific needs of their students and families, keep updated on the changing landscape within their schools, and ultimately become pillars of their local communities.

### **School-based Health Centers**

Children's Aid believes that one of the best and most effective ways to keep children healthy is by making high-quality physical, mental, and dental health care as accessible as possible. For many children, that means building health care services into their schools because it is the place where they spend the most time. School-Based Health centers (SBHCs) ensure that children miss as little class time as possible if they need medical care. They also reduce the burden on working parents, who know their kids can get high-quality professional care without having to take time off from work. SBHCs are often paired within our community school partnerships because of the success our communities have seen from holistic, whole-child programming on a student's well-being and social-emotional outcomes.

Children's Aid operates six SBHCs that provide an array of medical, dental and behavioral health services. Our SBHCs are all located in low-income neighborhoods where access to health care can be an ever-present roadblock for families. In the 2020-2021 school year, our SBHCs served 2,824 students and saw a total number of 10,291 visits, including nearly 4,644 medical visits, 2,512 behavioral health visits and nearly 538 dental visits, as well as 2,597 first aid care visits. Children's Aid's school-based health centers provide comprehensive and continuous services at no cost to children and their families. For many young people, Children's Aid's school-based health centers are their first and only access to health care.



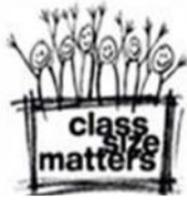
## Conclusion

The Class Size State law was instituted to give all students a chance to succeed, regardless of their income, zip code or any other background. At the same time, we are concerned that when the need for physical space in NYCPS buildings becomes an issue, critical services like ours will be made expendable.

When faced with the mandate of a law, we fear that schools will look to our spaces in the schools as the first spaces to decommission and repurpose. While the law does stipulate that CBOs like Children's Aid should be *consulted* when repurposing space in school buildings, that does not sufficiently address the level of commitment to protecting these services that are ultimately to the benefit of our young people and families.

Our communities deserve high-quality schools with low class sizes that allow for students to have close relationships with educators and support staff. Initiatives like Community Schools and School-Based Health Centers however act as additional layers of support for our most marginalized young people, and when combined with lower class sizes, will mean even greater gains for our children and families.

Children's Aid sincerely thanks the Education Committee and the New York City Council for their vigorous support of children, youth, families, and communities in New York City, and we look forward to continuing to partner. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony on this very important issue. Please feel free to contact me at [dbravo@childrensaidnyc.org](mailto:dbravo@childrensaidnyc.org) with any questions regarding this testimony.



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## **Testimony before the City Council on the NYC Department of Education’s failure to plan for class size reduction**

February 29, 2024

Thank you Chair Joseph and the other members of the Education Committee for holding these important hearings today. My name is Leonie Haimson, and I am the Executive Director of Class Size Matters and I am here with my Associate, Michael Rance.

In 2003, New York state’s highest court, the Court of Appeals, ruled in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case that New York City students were denied their right under the State Constitution of a sound basic education, in part because their class sizes were too large. that On June 2, 2022, in recognition of the fact that NYC Department of Education was finally due to receive their full complement of Foundation funding of more than \$1.3 billion a year as a result of the CFE lawsuit, the NY State Legislature overwhelming passed a bill to require NYC schools to implement a five-year class size reduction plan, beginning in the fall of 2022.

This bill was approved by a vote of 59-4 in the Senate and 147-2 in the Assembly. Then, on Sept. 8, 2022, Gov. Kathy Hochul signed the bill into law, based upon an agreement that the five-year phase-in period should begin in fall of 2023 instead of the fall of 2022, thereby giving the city an extra year of planning.<sup>1</sup> This bill is now known as Chapter 556 of the Laws of 2022.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence that the city took advantage of this extra year to plan, and even today, nearly two years after the class size law was passed, has done nothing to ensure that schools will be able to meet its goals. These law calls for the phase-in over five years of smaller classes of no more than 20 students per class in grades K-3, no more than 23 students per class in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, and no more than 25 students per class in high school, except for physical education and performing groups such as orchestra and band, which must be capped at forty students per class. These are the same class sizes in NYC’s original Contract for Excellence plan that was approved by the NY State Education Department in 2007, yet as class size limits rather than averages and never implemented by the Department of Education.

Each year starting this year, in September 2023, 20 percent of all public school classes are supposed to achieve these caps, with an additional 20 percent of classes added each year, until the smaller class sizes are achieved citywide by the end of the 2027-2028 school year. The city’s plan must prioritize schools with high levels of poverty to implement these caps first.

Two years ago, we interviewed parents, teachers, and principals, when class sizes were unprecedentedly small because enrollment had declined, and the DOE had refrained from cutting school budgets. Many teachers said this was the first year that their class sizes had allowed them to reach every student, no matter their

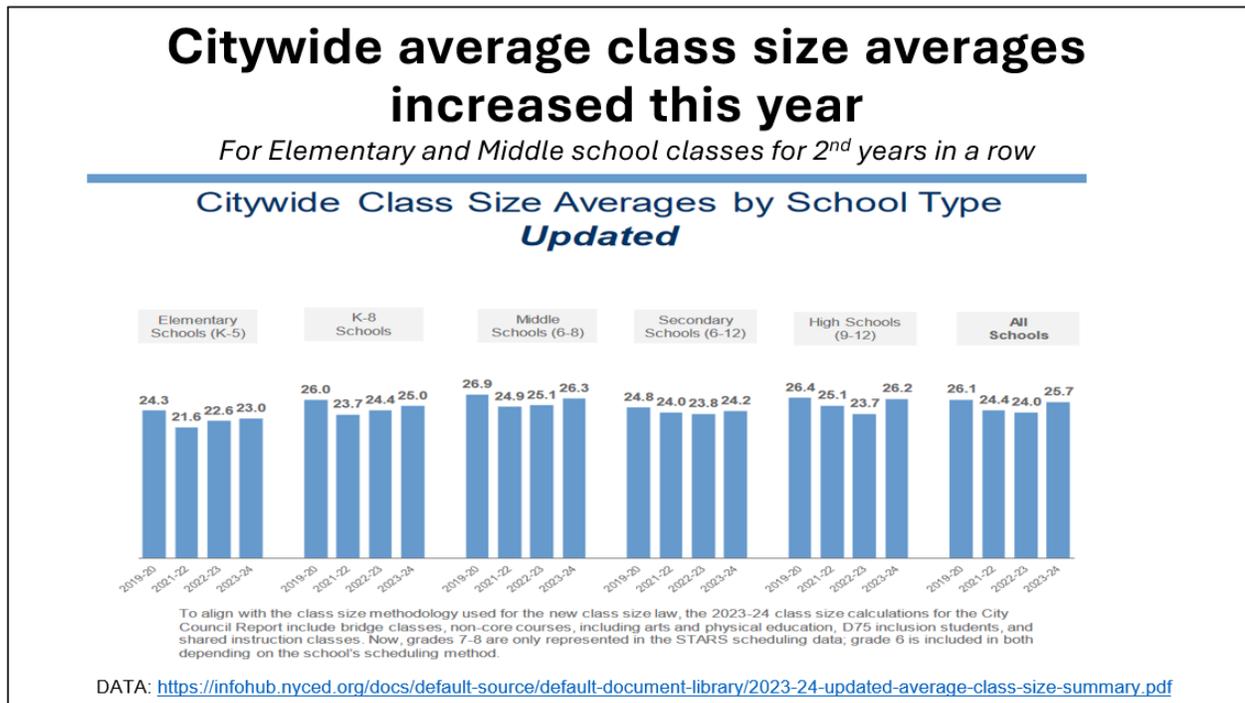
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/211-D>

needs, whether academically or emotionally. Parents told us that this was the first year they felt that their child's teachers actually knew them well.

Sadly, class sizes have increased in most schools for the last two years in a row, and likely will continue to increase without significant changes in Department of Education policies and planning.

See the chart below, posted by DOE on February 15, which shows that as of this fall, citywide average class sizes had increased at all levels, and for elementary and middle schools this was the second year in a row of increases.<sup>2</sup>



While this year's class size goal of 20% was met, next year's goal of 40% looks questionable at this point, while the out-year goals for years three to five are implausible, given current DOE plans to continue to shrink school budgets and the capital plan.

This year only about 39.2% of classes met the cap compared to more than 42% of classes two years ago, according to our analysis of DOE class size data, which means the 40% benchmark will not be reached if current trends continue.

One of the claims made by the DOE and their allies who oppose the law is that reducing class size would be somehow inequitable, which is absurd, given the fact that students who are disadvantaged, whether from low-income families, students of color, English Language Learners, or those with disabilities have been shown to benefit the most from smaller classes.<sup>3</sup>

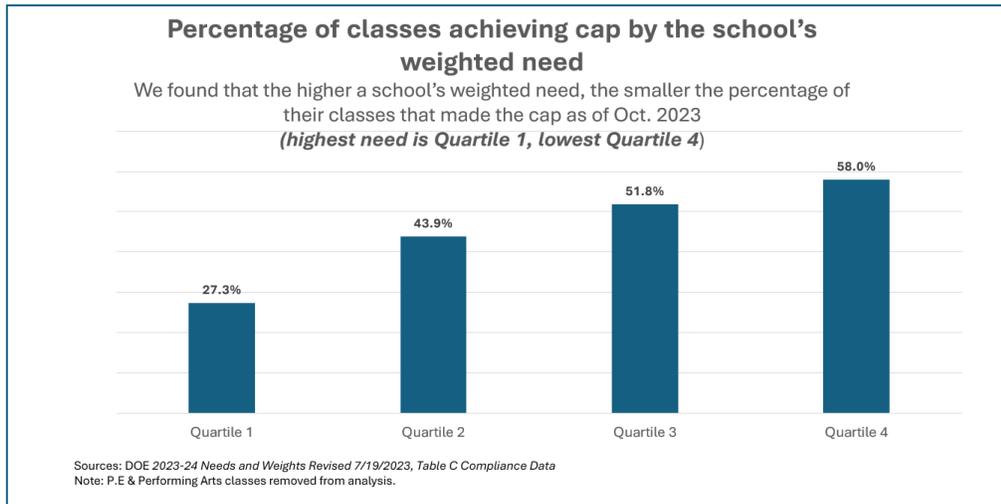
The DOE base their claim by arguing that the highest need schools already have small enough classes. Yet when one analyzes the class sizes of schools with the highest weighted need, according to a formula devised by the New York State Education Department that takes account of both the percentage and number of high needs students in a school, we found the opposite to be true.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2023-24-updated-average-class-size-summary.pdf>

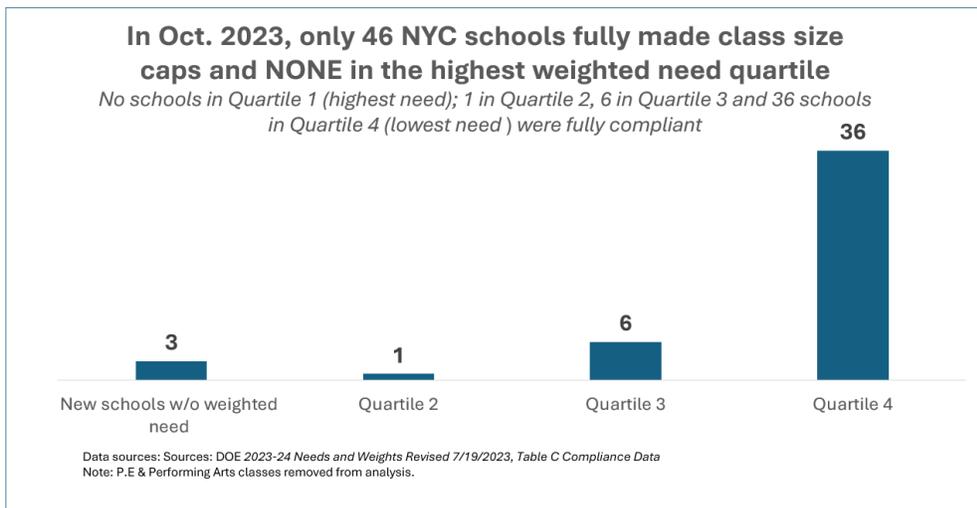
<sup>3</sup> See published studies here: <https://classsizematters.org/research-and-links/#opportunity>

<sup>4</sup> The NYSED weighted need formula takes the percentages of English Language Learners, students with disabilities, 2 students in poverty and those at the lowest achievement levels (Level I) in each school. These percentages are then

When NYC schools are separated into quartiles according to their weighted need, we found that the higher a school’s need, the smaller the percentage of their classes that met the new class size caps as of this fall, as shown in the chart below. **Only 27.3% of classes met the cap among Quartile 1 schools, which were the schools with the highest weighted need, compared to 58% of schools in the lowest weighted need.**



A similar pattern holds when analyzing which NYC schools met all of the class size caps this fall. Only 46 of more than 1500 NYC public schools had all their classes in compliance with the caps, and not one of these schools was in the highest weighted need quartile, while 36 schools were in the lowest weighted need quartile.



Last April, the Chancellor appointed a Class Size Working Group to develop recommendations for the steps DOE should take to comply with the law. I was appointed as a member of this group, along with more than 40 other parent leaders, educators, and other advocates. In December, we released our report that included many actionable, effective proposals, including some that would be cost-free or even cost-saving. They include but are not limited to the following:

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multiplied by the school’s enrollment and then added to yield a summed to yield a pupil weighted need value for each school. Those schools with the highest weighted need are supposed to receive most of the Contract for Excellence funds. [https://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/C4E/11-12\\_C4E/doc/technical\\_supplement\\_need\\_analysis\\_C4E\\_11-12.pdf](https://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/C4E/11-12_C4E/doc/technical_supplement_need_analysis_C4E_11-12.pdf) The DOE list of NYC schools according to their weighted need is here: [https://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/C4E/23-24\\_C4E/2023-24-c4e-needs-weights-nyc-updated.xlsx](https://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/C4E/23-24_C4E/2023-24-c4e-needs-weights-nyc-updated.xlsx)

- Stop co-locating schools without an analysis, including in their Educational Impact Statements, to show that these changes will not prevent the ability of existing schools to lower class size;
- Adjust enrollment at nearby schools that have the same grade levels to better ensure that all schools have enough space for smaller classes;
- Accelerate and build more schools in overcrowded communities, including adding annexes and acquiring empty parochial and charter school buildings;
- Strengthen the teacher pipeline and provide incentives to teachers to work especially in the highest need schools;
- Consider adding a separate budget line for class size reduction & keep the Fair Student Funding allocation for other critical school & classroom needs.

A substantial and growing number of Community Education Councils have adopted a resolution urging the DOE to adopt these proposals and implement a real plan to lower class size in accordance with the law.<sup>5</sup>

Yet so far the DoE has not accepted any of these recommendations. Instead, they are doing the opposite. They continue to co-locate schools without any analysis of whether this will prevent existing schools from being able to lower class size. They are planning to slash the DOE budget by over \$700 million each year for the next four years, and they are cutting the funding for new school construction in half.<sup>6</sup> They have also told principals at overcrowded schools that they cannot ask to cap their enrollment at lower levels next year to reduce class size. This refusal to take any steps to allow for smaller classes will likely cause class sizes to increase rather than decrease.

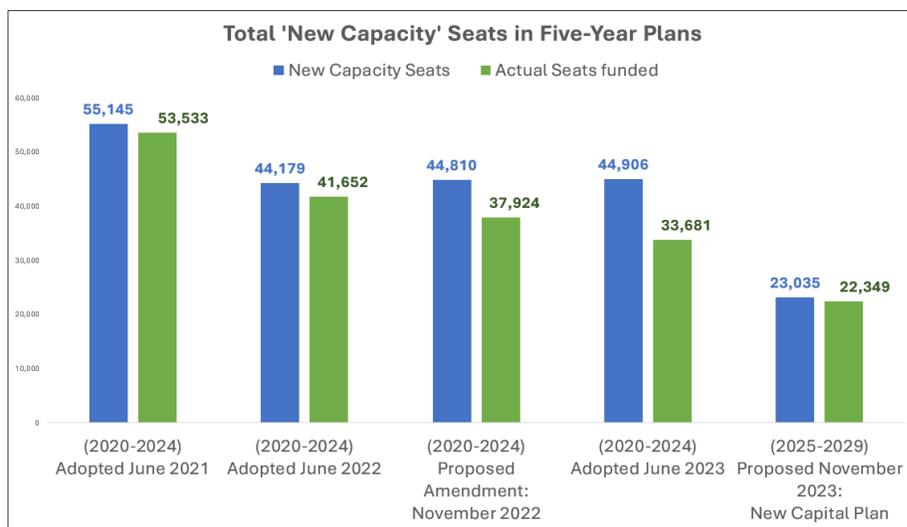
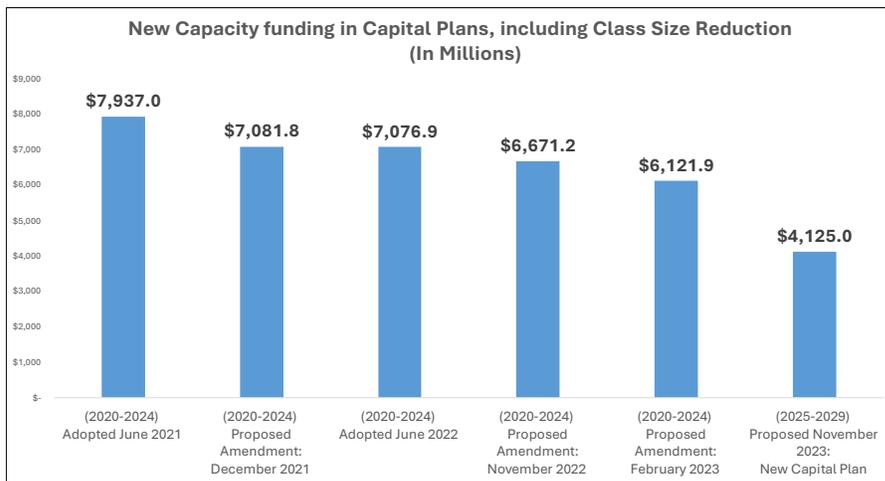
I would like to focus on the capital plan, which gets the least attention generally, but is critical if schools in the most overcrowded community are to have the space for smaller classes. Rather than ramp up the creation of new seats as soon as the bill passed and was signed into law, the SCA has cut the funding for new seats by over \$2.5 billion, and the number of new seats nearly in half.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> As of this date, the following CECs, parent groups and Community Boards including [Manhattan HS Presidents Council](#), [CEC 4](#), [CEC 5](#), [CEC 6](#), [CEC 15](#), [CEC 19](#), [CEC 21](#), and the Citywide Council on Special Education, as well as Community Board 11 and [Community Board 12](#) in Manhattan have adopted similar resolutions posted here: <https://classsizematters.org/resolution-for-cecs-community-groups-on-need-for-doe-to-lower-class-size-in-compliance-with-the-law/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/peg1-24.pdf> & NYC School Construction Authority, FY 2025-2029 Proposed Five-Year Capital Plan, Feb. 2024 at <http://nycsca.org/Community/Capital-Plan-Reports-Data#Capital-Plan-67>

<sup>7</sup> When the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor was asked about these radical cuts to the capital plan at a meeting on Nov. 10, 2023, they said that this was a decision made not by them but by the NYC Office of Management and Budget. See: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/883381018>



Because it takes at least four to five years to site and build a school, if the new proposed five-year capital plan for 2025-2029 is adopted, it is extremely unlikely that there will be enough space to lower class size in the most overcrowded communities.

It is also greatly concerning that 77% of seats funded in the new five-year plan lack any identification as to their borough, district, or grade level. Instead, the SCA asserts that new capacity projects will only be listed in the plan “*following the identification of a suitable site and the commencement of the school facility’s design process.*”<sup>8</sup>

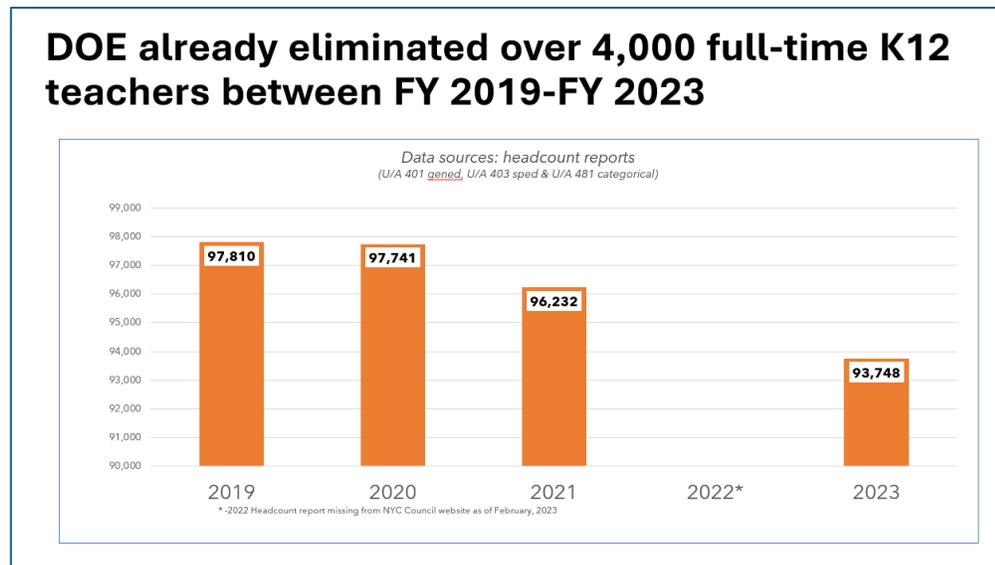
This lack of transparency not only leaves the public and elected officials entirely out of the potential siting of schools and their input ignored as to where new schools are needed, it also appears to violate two state laws. First, EDN § 2590-o requires the Chancellor to annually prepare an “*educational facilities master plan...including a list of prioritized projects to the extent ascertainable and [to] list each proposed new*

<sup>8</sup> NYC School Construction Authority, FY 2025-2029 Proposed Five-Year Capital Plan, February 2024 [https://dnnhh5cc1.blob.core.windows.net/portals/0/Capital\\_Plan/Capital\\_plans/02012024\\_25\\_29\\_CapitalPlan.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&si=DNNFileManagerPolicy&sig=ExyJ25yWw4Gt5zwwG%2F%2F9rdA14929cO%2Ba%2FMb0vAWq7G5v%3D](https://dnnhh5cc1.blob.core.windows.net/portals/0/Capital_Plan/Capital_plans/02012024_25_29_CapitalPlan.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&si=DNNFileManagerPolicy&sig=ExyJ25yWw4Gt5zwwG%2F%2F9rdA14929cO%2Ba%2FMb0vAWq7G5v%3D), p. 16

educational facility and set forth a justification, including demographic data, documenting the long term need therefor.”<sup>9</sup>

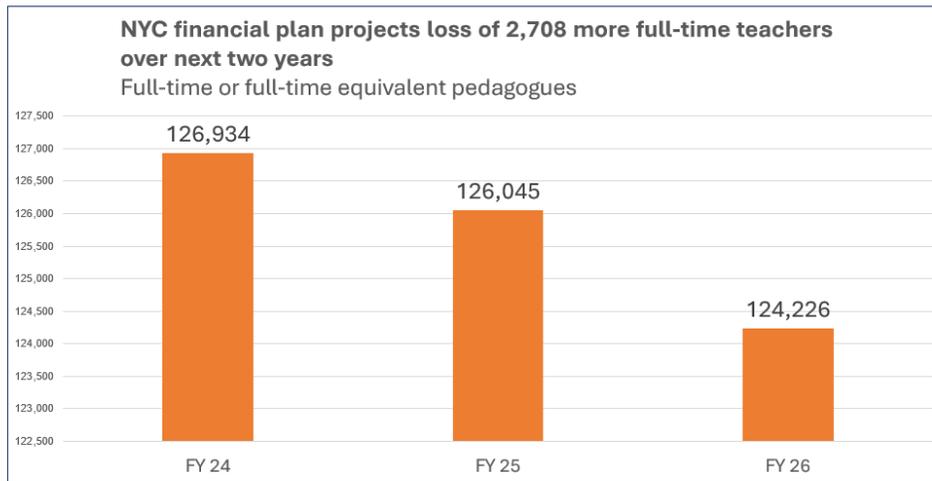
It also appears to violate the class size law, now known as Chapter 556 of the Laws of 2022. which states that the annual class size plan submitted to the state must include “the annual capital plan for school construction and leasing to show how many classrooms will be added in each year and in which schools and districts to achieve the class size targets.”<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, rather than adding to the teaching force as will be necessary to lower class size, the DOE has already shrunk the K12 teaching force by over 4000 teachers since 2020, and according to the just-released NYC Financial Plan, they intend to further shrink the full time teaching force by another 2,700 over the next two years. Obviously, the more the teaching force is diminished, the more difficult it will be to hire the teachers necessary to staff smaller classes, starting next year and beyond.



<sup>9</sup> <https://codes.findlaw.com/ny/education-law/edn-sect-2590-o/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/211-D> this refusal to divulge where new schools are planned appears contrary to the promises in an Memorandum of Understanding with the Council, signed by Mayor, Speaker and Chancellor on November 10, 2004, renewed annually which “Requires the annual amendment to the capital plan to include siting and/or location of each project (by building or school district, as appropriate), cost estimates, start dates and completion dates for each project. The 2022 version of the MOU is posted at <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5691569&GUID=DF0D66A7-2A38-470D-9CEA-4D084DBEE5EC&Options=&Search=>



The other argument that the administration has put forward against lowering class size is that there is not enough funding. How much will it cost?

The DOE has said that about 10,000 to 12,000 additional teachers would have to be hired, while the Independent Budget Office has estimated 17,000 teachers.<sup>11</sup> The IBO says the cost will be \$214 million in 2026, \$427 million in 2027, and \$427 million in 2028. Meanwhile, not only has the DOE received more than \$1.3 billion in additional Foundation Aid from the state to finally settle the CFE lawsuit, but also next year's city budget will have a \$3.3 billion surplus, as the IBO points out.<sup>12</sup>

There are other sources of additional savings and revenue that could help DOE pay for the additional staffing that will be necessary. Overall, charter schools are costing the DOE nearly \$3 billion a year. In addition, DOE is required to subsidize the rent for charter schools, the only school district in the state and indeed the nation with this onerous obligation. The cost to DOE of these rental subsidies is about \$100 million this year, an amount that is rising fast.<sup>13</sup> In 2021, Class Size Matters released a report, showing how in many cases, these rents are inflated by Charter Management Organizations in order to leverage more dollars out of DOE.<sup>14</sup> A bill in the Legislature, S2137/A5672, sponsored by Senator Liu and AM Benedetto, would remove the obligation of DOE to help pay for charter rent, and we urge the Council to pass a resolutions in support of this legislation.<sup>15</sup>

DOE has also been denied any state charter transition aid, the only school district in the state of New York that does not receive this aid, designed to help districts pay for part of the cost of charter school expansion. The Education Law Center estimates that the city has lost out on \$2.81 billion of transition aid between 2011 and 2022 and would receive about \$93 million this year if the city were eligible for transition aid.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lPni5TPXvTDnTeTZwEN8FO7Wng2Gas-v/view>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/print-2024-preliminary-budget-report-february.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> The spreadsheet with DOE charter rental subsidies for FY 2024 is here; <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2024/02/Department-of-Education-Charter-School-Lease-Assistance-Report.xlsx> The total is \$235,607,179. As the state reimburses 60%, the estimated cost this year to DOE will be more than \$94 million.

<sup>14</sup> <https://classsizematters.org/new-report-finds-doe-overspent-by-many-millions-on-charter-school-rental-subsidies-for-charter-schools-and-owed-millions-to-co-located-public-schools-for-facility-upgrades/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S2137> and <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/a5672>

<sup>16</sup> <https://edlawcenter.org/the-unsustainable-cost-to-new-york-city-schools-of-charter-school-growth/> Other revenue options posted here: <https://classsizematters.org/revenue-options-for-nyc-to-prevent-big-budget-cuts/>

The Legislature should also raise the capital reimbursement rate for new school construction to 50%, where we believe it was originally, which could potentially yield billions more in capital funds. According to SCA/DOE, NYC currently receives only 25% reimbursement for new school construction, while still receiving 50% for other capital improvements.

We also need more accurate and more granular class size reporting and want to thank Council Chair Joseph for introducing Local Law 1075, and 15 number of co-sponsors so far.<sup>17</sup> Right now, the DOE only reports on the size of classes as of Oct. 31, but as we know, class sizes often grow significantly over the course of the year. Thus, we need to know what size they are as of Feb. 15, and also at the end of the year, especially as DOE is supposed to be in full compliance with the law at the end of 2027-2028 school year. We also need to know the actual class sizes by school, rather than just class size averages and ranges as currently reported. Finally, the class sizes of specialized inclusion classes, such as NEST, Horizon, and AIMS classes should be reported, to ensure that they remain small enough and far below the caps in the law. Currently, the class sizes of these special programs are not separately reported at all.

Thank you again for introducing this important bill and for holding these hearings today.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6252767&GUID=0BA07C97-A9BE-418F-B20F-F52682D3E50E&Options=&Search=> 8



COMMUNITY  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL  
DISTRICT 6

**CEC 6 Resolution 2024-0201**

**February 15, 2024**

Manuel Ramirez  
District  
Superintendent

***Resolution urging NYCPS to implement the proposals of the Class Size Working Group and comply with the new class size law***

**Vote:** 8 In Favor, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent. PASSED 2/15/2024.

**OFFICERS**

Luis Camilo  
President  
IEP Representative

Whereas, in 2003, the New York Court of Appeals in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case determined that NYC public school class sizes were too large to provide students with their constitutional right to a sound basic education;

Caroline Jose  
Vice President

Whereas, following that decision, class sizes in NYC schools increased, and to this day, remain far larger than they are in the rest of the state;

Noemi Diaz  
Recording Secretary

Whereas, smaller classes have been shown through research to improve school culture with teachers better able to address the needs of their students both academically and holistically;

Rosanna Diaz  
Treasurer

Whereas, many studies show that class size reduction leads to better student outcomes in every way that can be measured, including better grades and test scores, fewer behavior problems, greater likelihood to graduate from high school on time and enroll in college;

**COUNCIL  
MEMBERS**

Jennifer Bennion

Whereas, in June 2022, the NY Legislature overwhelmingly passed [Education Law 211-D](#) by a vote of 59-4 in the State Senate and 147-2 in the Assembly, requiring that NYC implement a five-year phase-in of smaller classes beginning in the fall of 2022 to fulfill the promise of CFE;

Lisa Brassell

Whereas, on Sept. 8, 2022, Gov. Kathy Hochul signed the bill into law, based upon an amendment that the five-year phase-in of smaller classes would begin instead in Sept. 2023;

Mayra Cueto

Whereas, the law calls for class sizes to be limited to no more than 20 students per class in grades K-3, no more than 23 students per class in grades 4-8, and no more than 25 students per class in high school, with physical education and performing art classes capped at forty students per class;

John Gallagher  
Borough President  
Appointee

Whereas, instead of taking any positive steps to lower class size since the law was passed, the DOE's actions have resulted in average class sizes increasing citywide this fall, including in District 6; for elementary and middle school grades this was the second year in a row of increases;

Katherine Percival

Frances Rodriguez  
ELL Representative

Whereas, the percentage of classes that complied with these caps citywide and in District 6 schools sharply fell at all grade levels;

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
ASSISTANT**

CoShawn Holmes

In District 6, the percentage of classes in compliance with the caps declined from 52.4% to 46.5% in grades K-3 & fell from 53.3% to 47.9% for grades 4-8 between the fall of 2022 and the fall of 2023;

**Vacant**

BP Appointee

District 75 Rep.

Student Member

Whereas, since taking office, Mayor Adams has repeatedly cut school budgets, and plans to cut them even more next year;



Whereas, these budget cuts have occurred despite more than \$1.3 billion in additional annual state aid provided to NYC schools over the last three years, as a result of the CFE settlement;

Whereas, if enacted, the proposed budget cuts will likely lead to even sharper increases in class size next year;

Whereas, principals at overcrowded schools were also told that this fall they cannot ask for their schools' enrollments to be capped at lower levels to enable them to lower class size;

Whereas, the DOE has also proposed more than \$2 billion to be cut from school construction and expansion in the proposed five-year capital plan for FY 2025-2029, which would likely make it impossible for schools in the most overcrowded communities to have enough space to lower class;

There were ten overcrowded schools in District 6 with an enrollment of 4,300+ according to the latest Blue Book figures from the 2022-2023 school year;

Whereas, the new proposed capital plan also cuts twenty thousand school seats compared to the current five-year plan, and specifies new seats in only four school districts, and none in District 6;

Whereas, the plan also fails to identify the locations for 77% of the seats funded, as well as their grade levels, and instead declares that this information will only be provided after school sites have been acquired and the design process has begun;

Whereas, this unprecedented lack of transparency would leave parents, Community Education Councils, Community Boards, and local officials in the dark, and unable to provide any input about where schools are needed and should be built;

Whereas, this change also appears to violate the class size law as well as [Education Law 2590-o](#), which requires the Chancellor to annually prepare an *“educational facilities master plan...including a list of prioritized projects to the extent ascertainable and [to] list each proposed new educational facility and set forth a justification, including demographic data, documenting the long term need therefor.”*

Whereas given current trends, it is highly unlikely that the DOE will make the legal mandate next year that 40% of classes meet these class size caps, and even less likely that they will achieve the mandates in years three to five;

Whereas, the Class Size Working Group has proposed a variety of actionable and effective policies that would enable the DOE to lower class sizes to the mandated levels starting next year and beyond, including changes in enrollment, budgeting, and the capital plan;

Whereas, the Working Group has also proposed that no changes in school utilization be proposed by the DOE without an analysis that there will be sufficient space in existing schools to lower class size to mandated levels;

Whereas, despite this, the DOE has continued to propose changes in school utilization that assume current class sizes in the schools affected by these proposals will remain forever, even when schools have many classes above the mandated levels;

Whereas, the Working Group has also proposed that Community Education Councils be involved in the advisory process as Community Boards are currently when the city is considering approving large scale development projects, to try to ensure that schools are built along with housing;



**Community Education Council District 6**  
Working Together to Defend Public Education and Our Schools

Be it resolved that the DOE will not propose any changes in school utilization without an analysis in the Educational Impact Statement that the change will not prevent the existing schools from lowering class size to the levels required by the law;

Be it resolved that the Community Education Council in District 6 calls on the Mayor and the Chancellor to refrain from cutting school budgets or the capital plan, but instead to increase funding in both purposes to ensure that schools can be able to lower class sizes to the levels required by the law;

Be it resolved that the Community Education Council in District 6 demands that DOE and the School Construction Authority specify in the proposed capital plan where new schools are needed and where they will be built, and how that will provide enough space in every district to lower class size to mandated levels;

Be it resolved that the Community Education Council in District 6 recommends that City Planning should include CECs as well as Citywide Councils in the advisory process when large scale developments or rezonings are proposed; to ensure that sufficient school space is built along with new housing and that local schools do not become even more overcrowded and unable to lower class size;

Be it resolved that the Community Education Council in District 6 urges the Mayor and the Chancellor and immediately adopt the Class Size Working Group's proposals, so that NYC students are able to benefit from the personalized feedback necessary for them to have a better chance to learn;

Be it resolved that should the Mayor and the Chancellor fail to take these necessary steps, the Community Education Council in District 6 urges the State Education Department to require them to devise and implement an effective class size reduction plan as soon as possible to achieve these goals.

**Council voted unanimously in favor**

**For: 8/10**

**Against: 0**

**Absent: 2**



2/27/2024

Education Committee  
New York City Council  
250 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the East Flatbush Community Development Corporation to express our deep concern regarding the failures of remote learning in New York City public schools. As an organization dedicated to the well-being and development of our community, we have witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by students, parents, and educators during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Remote learning has been a significant challenge for many families in East Flatbush, particularly those without access to reliable internet service or adequate technology. The lack of in-person instruction has resulted in learning loss, decreased engagement, and increased disparities in educational outcomes among our students.

Given the ongoing uncertainties surrounding the pandemic and the challenges of returning to full in-person learning, we strongly recommend that the New York City Department of Education provide parents with the option to enroll their children in a virtual learning program. This option would allow families to choose the learning modality that best meets their needs while ensuring that students continue to receive a high-quality education.

We believe that offering a virtual learning option would not only provide flexibility for families but also help address some of the issues that have arisen from the transition to remote learning. Additionally, it would ensure that all students have access to a safe and effective learning environment, regardless of their circumstances.

We urge the Education Committee to consider our recommendation and take action to implement a virtual learning option for parents in New York City. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working with you to ensure the success of our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will H", with a stylized flourish at the end.

William Hazell

Deputy Director

East Flatbush Community Development Corporation

[www.eastflatbushcdc.org](http://www.eastflatbushcdc.org)



## Education Council Consortium

Testimony of the Education Council Consortium  
before the New York City Council Committees on Education on Oversight - Implementing the State  
Class Size Law in New York City

February 2024

Thank you for this opportunity to submit a testimony on implementing the State Class Size Law in New York City. Education Council Consortium is a grassroots organization with the mission to develop and support NYC public school parent leadership through education, networking and organizing. We work toward the vision of a New York City public school system that is equitable, inclusive, antiracist and free of all forms of oppression and that provides an appropriate and humane education for all students in New York City. Our members are parent leaders, caregivers, community members, advocates and educators who believe in our vision.

Research has shown that students in smaller classes learn better, receive fewer disciplinary actions, and have a better likelihood of graduating high school, attending college and obtaining a STEM degree. These benefits are particularly pronounced for historically marginalized students, such as students living in poverty. Small classes also allow teachers to nurture stronger emotional connection with students - something that has become even more important since the pandemic, and an essential condition for implementing culturally responsive and sustaining education.

NYC principals in a 2008 survey indicated that for students to receive a quality education, class sizes should be no more than 20 students in grades K - 3, 22 to 23 students in 4th and 5th grades, 24 to 25 students in middle school and 25 students in high schools. Surveys of teachers also indicate that teachers overwhelmingly support reducing class sizes as a way to improve public schools.

The ECC supports the recommendations of the Class Size Working Group: we support investing in constructing new schools in overcrowded communities; rezoning areas where overutilized and underutilized buildings are nearby, in consultation with communities; building the teacher pipeline and creating incentives for teachers to work in schools with the highest needs; halting colocations that may prevent existing schools in the building from lowering class size; prioritizing preservation of ICT classes; rejecting trade-offs such as the elimination of art or music rooms. We also believe the work of class size reduction should begin in districts that have been historically divested by the NYC Department of Education - those districts with the highest poverty rates and largest number of students in temporary housing and migrant students. While many of these highest needs districts already have schools with appropriate class sizes, no district has all of its schools with required class sizes. We reject the NYC Department of Education's argument that class size reduction will further exacerbate the existing resource inequities.

The ECC is deeply concerned the Mayor's budget proposal will significantly stymie any efforts to comply with the class size law. Now more than ever we need a robust capital plan, yet funding for



## Education Council Consortium

new capacity has been reduced by over \$2 billion since the class size law passed. The new 5-year capital plan fails to identify new seats that are needed to reduce class size, seemingly to misrepresent the true needs for class size reduction. We are also alarmed by the Program to Eliminate the Gap which has been leading to a steady reduction of the teacher headcounts in the last several years. We have lost thousands of teacher positions through the PEG in a time when we need more teachers.

We remind the DOE that the increase in Foundation Aid is the result of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit in which the State's highest court ruled that NYC students were deprived of a sound basic education and that reducing class size was a high priority remedy. In other words, there is State funding that is intended for reducing class size. We further ask that the Mayor and the City Council demand the State pay for Transitional Aid for NYC charter students. We are the only district in the entire state specifically prohibited from receiving this State funding, which amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars each year. The Mayor and the City Council should also demand the state to amend the charter school law that requires NYC to pay for rent for charter schools. Again, we are the only school district in the State that is required to subsidize charter schools in this manner.

We urge the City Council to hold the Mayor accountable. He is in charge of our public schools and he is required to comply with the State law. He cannot pick and choose which laws to comply with.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony.

Board of Directors  
Education Council Consortium



## MITIGATING LIKELY HARMS OF IMPLEMENTING CLASS SIZE CAPS IN NEW YORK CITY

Statement of

Matthew M. Chingos\*

Vice President for Education Data and Policy, Urban Institute

before the

New York City Council

Committee on Education

## OVERSIGHT - IMPLEMENTING THE STATE CLASS SIZE LAW IN NEW YORK CITY

Thursday, February 29, 2024

\* The views expressed are my own and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders.

Chair Joseph and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony about the implementation of the State Class Size Law in New York City.

I am vice president for education data and policy at the Urban Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization based in Washington, DC. My colleagues and I support evidence-based education policymaking by conducting original research, creating policy analysis tools, and democratizing data.

I have published several studies on class size, including analyses of the potential implications of implementing the State Class Size Law. I also was a member of last year's class size working group convened by New York City Public Schools chancellor David Banks.

My conclusion based on research from across the nation and analyses of New York City data, conducted both by my team and other independent analysts, is that the State Class Size Law, while well-intentioned, could harm student success and education equity in New York City. New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) will need to carefully implement the law to reduce these harms, though state action to amend the law is likely required to eliminate them entirely.

## **Research Does Not Support Class Size Caps**

No student should learn in an overcrowded classroom, and there are good reasons for families and educators to want smaller classes for students. But whether the right number of students in a class is 20 or 25 has no clear, evidence-based answer because of the budgetary trade-offs required between hiring classroom teachers and funding other educational resources and student supports.

All else equal, most families, educators, and school leaders would prefer a class size of 20 to one of 25.<sup>1</sup> But all else is not equal, because school leaders need to balance class size with a range of other educational needs. For example, when principals decide how many classroom teachers to hire, they are thinking not just about class size but about how much money they want to have left over for math coaches, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, music programs, and after-school activities.

Requiring principals to meet the caps of the State Class Size Law effectively forces them to make decisions that they do not think best serve their students: to fire those math coaches or guidance counselors or art teachers, to cancel those after-school programs, or to limit the degree to which they can take a "whole child" approach to education.

Imposing the judgment of state policymakers over that of school leaders might make sense if a strong evidence base showed that the class size caps required by the law (20 in grades K-3, 23 in grades 4-8, and 25 in grades 9-12) were a better use of educational dollars than anything else a school might do.

But that is simply not the case. The conventional wisdom that smaller classes are better, and that they are especially effective in the early grades and for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, is based

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<sup>1</sup> Colyn Ritter, "The Top 10 Findings from EdChoice's 2023 Schooling in America Survey Series," EdChoice, August 1, 2023, <https://www.edchoice.org/engage/the-top-10-findings-from-edchoices-2023-schooling-in-america-survey-series/>.

primarily on a randomized experiment conducted in Tennessee in the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> That study is important, but the few other high-quality studies mostly find smaller or negligible effects of smaller classes.<sup>3</sup> One exception is a recent study from New York City that found class size effects on test scores about as large as the Tennessee study, but those benefits were offset by reduced learning in the classrooms of the new teachers that were hired to reduce class size.<sup>4</sup> In other words, getting the benefit of the smaller class came at the cost of hiring a teacher who was new to the school (and perhaps to the profession).

Even if we take the Tennessee results at face value, it is still not clear that smaller classes produce the best bang for the educational buck. For example, there is evidence that interventions such as tutoring, early childhood programs, and increases in instructional time have larger benefits relative to their costs than class-size reduction.<sup>5</sup> What's more, evidence from states that have implemented broad class-size reduction policies, such as California and Florida, suggests much smaller benefits.<sup>6</sup>

To be clear, there are good reasons for principals to keep classes from being too large and some evidence indicating that students will learn more in smaller classes. But there is no research-backed definition of "too large," and the evidence simply is not compelling enough to overrule principals' judgments by requiring them to adhere to inflexible caps.

## **Class Size Caps Would Likely Reduce Education Equity in New York City**

There is concerning evidence the State Class Size Law will do more harm than good in New York City. Without new funds to support the implementation of the law, principals may have to cut higher-impact activities to fund smaller classes, leading to worse student outcomes.

Most troubling from an equity perspective is the possibility that resources will be directed away from higher-need schools, which tend to have smaller classes already, to reduce class sizes in lower-need schools. And many of the schools with larger class sizes are popular schools that may have to turn families away, because the class-size mandates mean room for fewer students, leading to fewer seats at schools regarded as high-quality.

In recent analyses of data from New York City, my colleagues and I estimated that 80 percent of white and Asian students would see their class sizes reduced under full implementation of the State Class Size

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew M. Chingos, "Class Size and Student Outcomes: Research and Policy Implications," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 32, no. 2 (2013): 411–38. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.21677>.

<sup>3</sup> All rigorous research on the effects of class size on student outcomes is based on data from elementary and middle schools. I am not aware of any high-quality evidence on class size in high schools.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Gilraine, "A Method for Disentangling Multiple Treatments from a Regression Discontinuity Design," *Journal of Labor Economics* 38, no. 4 (2020): 1267–1311. <https://doi.org/10.1086/706740>.

<sup>5</sup> Douglas N. Harris, "Toward Policy-Relevant Benchmarks for Interpreting Effect Sizes: Combining Effects with Costs," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 31, no. 1 (2009): 3–29.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew M. Chingos, "The Impact of a Universal Class-Size Reduction Policy: Evidence from Florida's Statewide Mandate," *Economics of Education Review* 31, no. 5 (2012): 543–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2012.03.002>; Christopher Jepsen and Steven Rivkin, "Class Size Reduction and Student Achievement: The Potential Tradeoff between Teacher Quality and Class Size," *Journal of Human Resources* 44, no. 1 (2009): 223–50.

Law, compared with 56 percent of Black students and 66 percent of Hispanic students.<sup>7</sup> We also found that higher-income students would be more likely to see their class sizes reduced (78 percent, compared with 67 percent of lower-income students). These differences result from the fact that Black, Hispanic, and lower-income students are more likely to be enrolled in classes that already meet the caps than are Asian, white, and higher-income students. And these results are broadly consistent with analyses conducted by New York City's Independent Budget Office.<sup>8</sup>

This means that fully implementing the law will require directing more resources to lower-need schools, potentially reducing funding equity in New York City.<sup>9</sup> And if NYCPS implements the law without significant new resources, it may have to redirect funding from higher-need schools to lower-need schools. Across the board, most schools will likely have to make cuts in non-instructional personnel to make the class size budget math work.

The law will also require hiring thousands of new teachers over the coming years. This means that more students will be taught by less experienced teachers, which research shows blunted the initial benefits of a California class size policy in the 1990s.<sup>10</sup> These new positions will be concentrated in lower-need schools; if these positions are filled by teachers who transfer from higher-need schools, it may exacerbate shortages of experienced teachers at the schools that arguably need them most.

Class size reduction in New York City is a textbook illustration of the adage that “equal is not equitable.” An equal mandate (the class size caps) applied to a school system where resources (including smaller classes) are somewhat equitably distributed will lead to less equity. As state education commissioner Betty Rosa noted about the class size law, “You’re gonna have to take it from Peter to give it to Paul.”<sup>11</sup>

## Recommendations for Reform and Implementation

The state is in the strongest position to mitigate the inequitable impacts of the class size law by amending it to target those students most in need of additional educational resources and supports. The law currently requires the city to prioritize schools with higher poverty levels for class size reductions. Limiting the mandates to just those schools or having lower caps on class size in higher-needs schools would be more equitable than the current uniform mandate.

If the state chooses not to make the law more targeted, reducing implementation costs can help mitigate the law's negative impact on funding equity.<sup>12</sup> If total costs are lower, then the city can more

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<sup>7</sup> Matthew Chingos and Ariella Meltzer, “Class Size Reductions May Be Inequitably Distributed under a New Mandate in New York City” (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> Tainá Guarda and Sarita Subraminian, “How Would the New Limits to Class Sizes Affect New York City Schools?” (New York: New York City Independent Budget Office, 2023).

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Chingos, Ariella Meltzer, and James Carter, “How Will Implementing Class Size Caps in New York City Affect Funding Equity?” (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023).

<sup>10</sup> Jepsen and Rivkin, “Class Size Reduction and Student Achievement.”

<sup>11</sup> Alex Zimmerman, “Betty Rosa, New York’s Top Education Official, Raises Equity Concerns Over Class Size Law,” Chalkbeat New York, August 17, 2023, <https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2023/8/17/23836370/new-york-class-size-law-commissioner-betty-rosa-equity-implications/>.

<sup>12</sup> Chingos, Meltzer, and Carter, “How Will Implementing Class Size Caps in New York City Affect Funding Equity?”

likely fund implementation through an equitable formula like Fair Student Funding, which supports all schools based on student needs rather than targeting dollars to lower-need schools with bigger class sizes.

One simple reform that could reduce implementation costs would be for the state to allow modestly larger class size caps in classes with two teachers, such as integrated co-teaching classrooms that serve a mix of regular and special education students. My colleagues' and my work estimates that increasing the caps in these classes by 25 percent would cut the cost of implementing the law by more than half.<sup>13</sup>

NYCPS is more limited in its ability to mitigate the inequitable impacts of the class size law, but several implementation strategies could reduce the harm caused.

First, NYCPS should reduce class sizes in the highest-need schools before reducing class size anywhere else, going further than the law's requirement to prioritize schools with higher poverty levels. Any funding designated for class-size reduction should first flow to the schools with the greatest needs, so they do not have to reduce other necessary student supports in order to reduce class size. This will also allow higher-need schools to hire new teachers before new positions at lower-need schools become available.

Second, the city should provide as much additional funding to NYCPS as possible with the expectation that it is distributed equitably, such as through Fair Student Funding or a similar student-need-based formula. This approach would reduce the pressure on the highest-need schools to cut other critical student supports while expecting lower-need schools to fund new teaching positions out of existing budgets.

Finally, as the class size law is implemented, NYCPS should collect and publish a rich dataset to inform decisionmaking by policymakers, educators, and the public. These data should include not just information on compliance with the law, but which services, programs, and positions are being cut to free up resources for class size reduction; the credentials, characteristics, and performance ratings of teachers hired to staff the new classes; and any information on how student outcomes (including test scores, attendance, and other measures captured by the district) change as class sizes are reduced.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

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<sup>13</sup> Chingos, Meltzer, and Carter, "How Will Implementing Class Size Caps in New York City Affect Funding Equity?"

February 28, 2024

To the Education Committee of the New York City Council:

We are the Co-Presidents of the Bronx High School of Science Parents' Association for the 2023-2024 school year.

We are writing concerning the New York State Class Size mandate, which requires New York City high schools to phase in reduced class sizes, not to exceed 25 students over five years, beginning with the current school year of 2023-2024. We are deeply concerned that this mandate, despite the recommendations of the Class Size Working group, will both reduce available seats at high performing high schools and reduce the educational opportunities that those schools are currently able to offer, including advanced and AP courses, resulting in a devastating contraction of opportunities for New York City high school students.

We are asking the City Council to petition the NY State for specific exemptions from the class size mandate for high schools with a long, proven history of academic excellence, particularly those that have very high attendance and graduation rates, high Regent's exam pass rates, and which lack the space to expand the number of classrooms operating during any given period. Many of these schools are already in double and triple multisession and have maxed out their enrollment with their current space, even with a 10 or 11 period operating day. The large specialized schools and the large, comprehensive high schools will have no choice but to cut enrollment, course offerings, programs, or all three should the mandate stand with no modifications.

We can speak to the specialized high schools more specifically. There is broad consensus that there should be more opportunities for seats at specialized high schools, rather than fewer, so reducing enrollment is an option of last resort. These schools offer a broad array of elective classes and advanced academics that match the ability of the students, many of whom will have completed all but one or two Regents requirements by the end of 10th grade and are ready for college level work well before they are able to complete their 4-year PE and English credit requirements to graduate. Reducing the size of these classes does not have a pedagogical basis—these students have reached this level with larger class sizes. Moreover, we will show below that reducing class sizes necessarily reduces student access to advanced course work for which they are well prepared.

Using 10th grade Social Studies courses at the Bronx High School of Science as an example, here is how the class size mandate will have a negative impact:

- There are 748 students in a grade and teachers each currently teach five Social Studies classes, each containing 34 students.
- Under the current framework, there are 22 sections of sophomore Social Studies, requiring the equivalent of 4 teachers plus two classes.

- With the new mandate, there will be 30 sections of sophomore Social Studies, requiring the equivalent of 6 teachers.
- Those EIGHT additional sections will displace the offering of EIGHT advanced Social Studies classes due to not having sufficient teachers or classrooms to offer them – an academically devastating blow to students and families.
- Extrapolating this to every grade, that is an additional 32 sections, replacing 32 electives, reducing opportunities for more than 1,000 students in Social Studies alone.
- The alternative, keeping only 22 sections of Sophomore social studies instead of expanding to 30, would result in an enrollment reduction of 198 students, from 748 to 550. That would reduce available seats, and would still result in a reduction of available electives due to the smaller student population.
- Either way, access to advanced courses will be reduced without a specific, targeted exemption.

The State mandate was instituted to give struggling students a chance to succeed. The effort should be applauded. What broad, overarching laws fail to do is to identify those instances where implementing the law would actually restrain progress that has already been made at the individual school level. There is no way to implement this law without an adverse impact on advanced course offerings, despite what the Class Size Working Group may wish is possible. Simply redistributing students without simultaneously building the framework and the resources to support their needs in different buildings with teachers that do not have experience teaching high level courses will not solve anything. Instead, we need to keep what's working and utilize a combination of peer mentoring and reduction of class sizes in schools where students are not graduating or reaching the advanced Regent's level reliably in order to build up high quality programs in more schools.

We ask for a permanent exemption to the class size mandate to be applied to high performing schools with a high attendance rate and a high regents pass rate and that are already at or over capacity, such as the Bronx High School of Science. Such an exemption will allow these schools to continue to offer the advanced diplomas, advanced courses, arts endorsements, CTE endorsements, and dual diplomas that make certain NYC Public schools crown jewels in not only the city and state's educational systems, but in the nation.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Elizabeth Polkovitz, Christine Kattan, and Jennifer Allen-Cheng  
Co-Presidents, Bronx High School of Science Parents' Association

# PLACE NYC Backs Minority Report on Class Size Law

## **A Better Way: Practical Guidance To Implement the Class Size Law**



PLACE NYC (Parent Leaders for Accelerated Curriculum and Education) strongly supports the thoughtful and practical recommendations in the Class Size [Minority Report](#) “A Better Way, Practical Guidance To Implement the Class Size Law” prepared by elected parent leaders of the Class Size Working Group.

Since July 2022, PLACE NYC leadership has shared our concerns about the Class Size Law, particularly as it impacts access to accelerated programs and academically screened schools. In September 2023, we called upon state legislators to amend the law [to exempt high-performing successful schools and classrooms](#) from the implementation of this unfunded Class Size legislation. We believe a one-size-fits-all approach to compliance will hurt advanced learners especially from disadvantaged backgrounds.

PLACE NYC spearheaded an [open letter](#) to oppose enrollment caps and cuts to accelerated programs and enrichment offerings. Despite these letters making up **70%** of

the public comments received by the Working Group, their [final report](#) published on December 11, 2023 recommended “enrollment adjustments” (capping) to schools with larger class sizes with no space to comply. So much for parent voices!

The Minority Report lays out recommendations for a pragmatic, phased-in approach, prioritizing resources for K-3 students in the **highest economic need index schools with the lowest academic proficiency**. Additionally, asking for the build-out of new schools in the most overcrowded districts *before* making enrollment adjustments or cutting electives and other programs.

PLACE NYC fully supports the Minority Report’s call for immediate amendments to the law. In particular, parents must be included in school exemption requests; currently as written, exemptions can only be done by DOE, UFT (Teachers Union) and CSA (Principals Union). Most importantly for PLACE NYC, the Minority Report outlined that “No enrollment caps should be implemented at any time. Allow parent choice to determine a school’s steady state enrollment levels even as new capacity is made available.”

“As a member of the Class Size Working Group and a proponent of lower class sizes, I felt compelled to dissent to the Working Group’s report, given the lack of pragmatic, actionable recommendations to actually lower class size, while forcing schools and families to make drastic, unacceptable trade-offs, including the inequitable transfer of resources away from low-income schools. Members of the Working Group refused to entertain even discussion of strengthening the law via targeted amendments, and continue to rely on non-substantive, ad hominem attacks on anyone who questions it. We hope our legislators will read this Minority Report and see how they may realistically achieve the spirit of the law by amending the letter of the law.”, said Deborah Alexander, PLACE NYC leader and a member of the Class Size Working Group who co-authored the Minority Report.

PLACE NYC encourages NYC Public Schools to adopt the phased-in recommendations outlined in the Minority Report to implement the Class Size reduction law. We also call upon Senator John Liu, the sponsor of this law, and all state legislators to read the Minority Report and amend the law as suggested in the upcoming 2024 legislative session.

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Adama Holley, and I am submitting this testimony to convey my concerns about the new class size bil. This bill could be potentially detrimental to schools in my community by diverting much needed funding and resources away from schools that are underperforming and considered high-need schools, in particular those in high poverty districts. I live in the Bronx with my family, where schools are underperforming and need the most attention and support if they;re to have any chance of improving.

I am the parent of four children: My oldest child dropped out of school and got her GED as a result of a failed public school system. My second oldest child graduated from Forsyth Satellite Program (an alternative high school that helps students that have been left behind catch up with the academic requirements to graduate high school) last year, and my youngest two attend Eagle Academy because I refused to send them to the same failing zoned schools in my community that failed my daughters. Eagle Academy is a great school, but schools like the alternative high school my youngest daughter graduated from cannot afford to lose out on additional funding, resources and access to great teachers. This class size bill, as currently written, is likely to divert new funding and resources to schools in low-need, wealthier school districts that are already performing well, simply because enrollment is higher (i.e., they have a higher share of classrooms over the new class size caps). Instead, I ask that additional attention and funding be used to improve schools in neighborhoods where students need the most help.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Adama Holley

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Adaris Sanchez. Although I am not a parent, I have a host of nieces and nephews that are currently attending NYC public schools. I believe that we are making a big mistake by implementing the recently passed "Class Size" Bill/Law. High-need public schools that serve low-income families, such as the schools that my nieces and nephews attend, consistently struggle with teacher recruitment and retention, and often bear the brunt of teacher shortages. Low-need public schools, in wealthier communities, that are in high demand and therefore end up with the highest share of classes over the caps (as dictated by the new class size bill), will most likely be prioritized by this bill/law even though they are already great schools. In contrast, the schools that my nieces and nephews attend, in high-need, high-poverty school districts, are likely to already be in compliance with the new class size caps and therefore will not benefit from this law.

In particular, I'm concerned about the effects the class size mandate will have on teacher quality at the schools where my nieces and nephews are currently enrolled. I know full well from my experience as a public school student back in the day, that a great teacher in the classroom makes all the difference in the world for a child's ability to succeed academically, which in turn can affect their trajectories and lives (i.e., will affect a child's ability to attend college, their professional/career success, their ultimate quality of life, etc.).

I remember some of the great teachers I had when I attended public school, who really made a difference in my education and in my life. Some of the classes I had with the very best teacher were big/overcrowded classes. But, because we had a great teacher in front of the classroom, we all learned a lot, even more than we did in small classes with more inexperienced or ineffective teachers. The best teachers that I had back then, that really cared about us and did their best to ensure that we were successful, made all the difference in my life and are the reason I was able to graduate high school on time and go on to attend college. If those great teachers were to have left my school before I had the opportunity to be in their classes, I don't know if I would have gone on to college or where I would be today.

That's why it's so important that the public schools that my nieces and nephews attend (as well as all high-need, struggling schools that serve low-income families), that have the most trouble recruiting and retaining the best teachers, are not put in jeopardy of losing the quality teachers they currently have. But, in order to comply with the new class size caps, high-performing public schools in high demand (where a

lot of classes exceed the new caps) will be forced to poach the best teachers at high-need schools, like the schools that serve my family members. The children in neighborhoods like mine, such as my nieces and nephews, who attend high-need, high-poverty schools will be hurt by this new law. Their public schools cannot afford to lose any of their best teachers. It's not fair that what's left of the great teachers at the schools that need them the most, may likely be diverted to low-need public schools that already have great teachers.

My nieces and nephews, as well as all NYC students enrolled at high-need, struggling public schools, rely on the quality teachers left at their schools to help them be successful. Please give them a chance to be successful in school and in life, while their schools still have a few great teachers willing to stick around.

I urge the Council and the Mayor to please rethink what you are about to do, and take into account the nuanced circumstances and needs of different districts and schools before moving forward with implementing the class size reduction mandate. Our students have too much to lose!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Adaris Sanchez

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Adontise Brice and I have two boys currently attending NYC public schools. My older son is in middle school, currently in the 8th grade, and my youngest son (age 3), who has autism, is enrolled in a 3-K program at a district 75 school.

My youngest, Tyshaun, is enrolled in a D75 program with very good teachers and is currently doing very well. He was non-verbal at age one and two, prior to enrolling in his current school program. He's currently in a class setting with 17 children and every day he's getting smarter and smarter. Tyshaun speaks words now, he knows his colors and is even able to count to ten. The dramatic progress he's made at his school can only be attributed to the wonderful teachers that work with him every day. They are well qualified and care deeply about Tyshaun's education and well-being. However, in my neighborhood, not every child is as lucky to have a great teacher like Tyshaun does. More qualified and experienced teachers are desperately needed in my community's schools because a great teacher can be hard to come by in low-income communities that consistently face growing teacher shortages.

I'm writing this testimony to express my deep concerns about NYC's new class size law and how it may inadvertently hurt high-need, struggling schools in communities like mine that face challenges with enrollment numbers as well as with getting and keeping good teachers. Many of NYC's public schools with the highest share of classrooms that exceed the new class size caps are overcrowded because they are great schools in good school districts where all the families living in the districts fight to get their kids into. So if the public schools with the highest percentage of classes over the caps are the ones prioritized by the new law, it seems that available funding and resources may very well go to the schools that need it the least, at the expense of those in high-need, low-income school districts like where I live. Furthermore, these lower need schools located in high-performing, and oftentimes more affluent, school districts will need to recruit lots more teachers in order to meet the new class size caps at a time when the NYC public school system is already facing problems with teacher shortages. Teachers teaching at failing/struggling schools in high-poverty or high-need school districts, where teaching is the most challenging and can be demoralizing at times, may be tempted to leave the schools that need them the most for an easier teaching position at a high-performing school.. Why wouldn't they switch schools if they have the opportunity to teach at a low-need, high-performing school where they're paid the same salary, but have an easier life?

This is why the new class size law could very well lead to more advantaged schools poaching teachers from high-need, struggling schools. Taking away the most qualified teachers from children like Tyshaun

who need them the most, does a tremendous disservice to NYC students and families. The tremendous progress that Tyshaun has made would not have been possible without the great teaching at his school. A quality teacher makes all the difference in the world on a child's educational success and life prospects. For example, it is always clear to me when Tyshaun goes through a period of time in class with a substitute teacher because I can tell by his behavior when he gets home that he didn't have a good day at school. My child, and all children attending struggling or high-need schools, can't afford to lose the great teacher they have.

Being in a classroom with a small class size certainly can help a child to learn. But, it's not going to make a difference without a great teacher in front of that classroom. If the quality teachers that we have at my son's school, and at schools throughout low-income, high-need NYC school districts, are taken away or diverted to low-need schools that are already performing well, this would be grave injustice to my sons and to children attending public school in communities like my own.

I am asking the Council and the Mayor to please think hard about what this new law could do to the high-need schools in communities like mine that serve mostly low-income students and families before implementing the new class size caps. We must ensure that our education policies prioritize public schools in neighborhoods like mine where schools need the most help and support. If we don't, our students have too much to lose.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Adontise Brice

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Adrienne Bannister and I am a proud mother of 2. My daughters are ten and eight years old, and both attend a district public school - The Bay School. I myself went to public school in Brownsville Brooklyn. I have seen personally some of the challenges of attending public school in a low supported high poverty neighborhood.

My kids' school, P.S. 105 in Far Rockaway is in district 27. It is in a high poverty, low-income area of Queens. Most of the students are eligible to receive free or reduced price lunch, and serve mainly students and families of color. For these reasons, I do not want my kids' school to lose more resources due to a well-intentioned law, which in actuality may likely make matters worse. This law could lead to advantaged schools poaching teachers from high-need, struggling public schools like P.S.105.

I agree with putting a limit on class sizes, but that's not the case in all districts across the city. The way it is written now, the implementation of this law across all school communities, would make inequities within our school system even worse than they are now.

I am deeply concerned that the class size bill may have a negative impact on teacher quality in schools like P.S. 105. Many of them already have smaller class sizes. If the new class size law prioritizes funding and resources for lower-poverty schools with a larger share of classrooms above the caps, what will this mean for high-poverty, high-need schools in neighborhoods like mine, that may not qualify because they already have small class sizes?

New York should be implementing a policy that helps schools in areas like mine. We shouldn't be taking great teachers away from them, or forcing them to weaken the support and resources for their students.

I would hope the Council and the Mayor make sure this law is implemented differently than it is currently written..They need to make sure this law addresses the needs of all the different districts and schools, because our students have too much to lose. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Bannister

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Alvita Pegues, and I am writing to express my dismay with the Class Size Size Bil/Law that is set to be implemented in NYC. I am a parent of one child, who used to attend Medgar Evers College Preparatory School (MECPS). I took my child out of the public school system and put her into private school because there were so many unnecessary nuances involved with being a student in the NYC school system. For one thing, getting your child into a school that has a strong curriculum is practically impossible. There was a lot of leg work involved with getting my daughter into MECPS, and yet while the curriculum is exceptionally rich, I found that it was at the cost of her emotional and psychological health. My daughter's experience in the public school system never lived up to what she deserves because resources are lacking in our local neighborhood school districts.

Fortunately for her, my husband and I can afford to send her to private school. But, many of my friends and family members cannot afford to make the same sacrifice. They depend on the local district schools available to them. However, the class size bill, as it's currently written, will likely exacerbate an already major problem for schools in the district by diverting new funding and resources away from public schools in my neighborhood that are high-need schools in and overall struggling school district, while benefiting low-need, already high-performing schools often located in much more affluent neighborhood school districts. Should these families have to further forgo the quality of their children's social, emotional and academic well being simply because funding will ultimately be funneled to schools that are already successful, at the expense of the underperforming schools in our district? This class size bill does not promote equity and access for all NYC families as it should, and instead the schools with the lowest need will benefit the most.

I implore you to consider how this new class size mandate could be destructive to school districts in high-need, higher-poverty neighborhood districts, and ask that you take reforming the class size mandate seriously, so that new funding and resources are going to the schools that need them the most.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alvita Pegues

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Antya Brown. I am an East New York resident and proud grandmother of several grandchildren that have graduated from or currently attend NYC public schools. My granddaughter Kaylin is in the 3rd grade at Brooklyn Gardens Elementary School.

In my years as an education advocate, I've become all too familiar with how public schools in Brooklyn have been consistently short-changed. And I have seen the stark contrast in quality between the schools in neighborhood districts like East New York and Brownsville versus those in more affluent, high-performing school districts. I am concerned that this new class size bill will make that contrast worse, not better.

This bill does not provide more resources to schools that need it most, like my granddaughter's school. Instead, it will funnel the best teachers - and even more resources - toward schools that are already well-off and high-performing. I've been around long enough to know that resources for our public school system are plentiful, but not infinite. That fact of the matter is that there will have to be a reshuffling of resources to make this policy work as written.

So I am here to demand answers. Why would we implement a law that forces teachers in East New York to choose which programs to cut, to make room for a change in class sizes we don't need? Why would we incentivize high-performing schools to poach the best teachers from low-performing ones? And most importantly: Why weren't we asked what our priorities were for our schools? Because if you asked me, smaller class sizes would certainly not be it. Schools in East New York need more resources, more extra curricular activities, and better facilities. But that's not what this bill provides. It risks making low-performing schools worse, and high-performing schools better. Our students deserve better than that. I urge the Council and the Mayor to change this bill.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Anyta Brown

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is April S. Blanding. I was born and raised in Harlem, and grew up attending NYC public schools. My family and I currently reside in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn and have lived in Bed-Stuy for the last 16 years. I am here today to voice my concerns over NYC's new law to reduce class sizes.

When I first heard about the Class Size Bill being passed, I was initially overjoyed, because smaller class sizes sound great in theory. However, after I did my research, I was disheartened by the potential drawbacks of the bill - in particular, how capping class sizes could lead to devastating effects on struggling, high-need schools like many of the schools in my neighborhood of Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn. I knew right away that I had to bring attention to this issue.

But first, a little bit about myself - I am the proud mother of two children attending NYC public schools in Brooklyn. My youngest daughter is enrolled at a charter school and my oldest daughter attends a district public high school in district 13. Finding the right schools for my daughters has not been easy, especially in my Bed-Stuy neighborhood, located within Brooklyn's school district 16. In district 16 where we live, the vast majority of students come from low-income families and many of its public schools are low-performing, high-need schools. For this reason, it has been a constant struggle to find schools in our neighborhood that work for my daughters, which led me to seek alternative options such as a district public high school outside of my neighborhood for my oldest daughter and a charter school for my youngest.

I would love to see our local Bed-Stuy schools improve and better public school options become available in district 16 so I could send both of my daughters to a high-quality public school closer to home. But, after doing my research on the new class size law, I was disheartened to find that it would actually make the schools near me even less appealing than they are today.

Capping class sizes will have all kinds of negative side effects in schools like those in Bed-Stuy. It will drive great teachers away from high-need schools and into the arms of wealthier ones, where the students need them less. This new law has the potential to contribute to further neglect of struggling, high-need schools in districts that need the most help like district 16, while benefiting schools in wealthier districts that are already succeeding.

According to a Chalkbeat analysis, at the city's highest poverty schools, only 38% of classrooms are larger than the caps allow. In contrast, at low to mid-poverty schools, 69% of classrooms are above the caps. If the new class size law prioritizes funding and resources for lower-poverty schools with a larger share of classrooms above the caps, what will this mean for high-poverty, high-need schools in neighborhoods like mine, that may not qualify because they already have small class sizes? Are there any funds earmarked or special provisions that specifically target the schools that need extra resources and support because they are in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods?

Why are we making policy changes to further benefit schools that are already succeeding the most? Shouldn't we focus on the schools that need the most help? It saddens me when lawmakers create bills that sound great in theory, but in actuality end up causing more harm than good once implemented!

I urge the Council and the Mayor to ensure this bill, if it comes here, benefits schools in neighborhoods with the highest needs. That's the kind of policy New York City deserves!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

April Blanding

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Arlene Rosado. I am the mother of two children attending New York City public schools. Both of my children have special needs, and both have IEPs. Finding schools where they can thrive has been a constant struggle.

Today, my daughter attends a District 75 school with great teachers who are committed to her success. But more teachers like them are needed in schools across the Bronx, where I live.

I'm testifying today to express my concerns about the new class size law, which could make this problem even worse. I am extremely concerned that the class size mandate may have a negative impact on teacher quality in schools like mine. This law could lead to advantaged schools poaching teachers from high-need, struggling public schools.

I am also concerned that this law will force schools like mine to make impossible decisions about which programs to keep, and which to cut. The programs, classes and activities at my daughter's school have kept her engaged and helped her learn. But if her school has to instead focus on class sizes, they may have to cut those programs just to keep up with the new law.

New York should be making policy that supports schools in high-need areas like mine. We shouldn't be taking great teachers away from them, or forcing them to weaken the programs that support their students.

I urge the Council and the Mayor to make sure this law is implemented differently than what I've heard so far, it needs to take into account the nuanced circumstances and needs of different districts and schools. Our students have too much to lose.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Arlene Rosado

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Crystal Rodriguez and I am writing to express my deep concern over the implementation of NYC's new Class Size Bill. I have two four year old twin daughters currently attending Pre-K at a daycare center in my neighborhood. I decided to keep my daughters at their daycare center for one more year instead of enrolling them into an NYC public school because I felt I needed the extra time to research schools in Sheepshead Bay so that I can identify the best school for my daughters.

As a parent advocate for a quality public school education for all NYC families, I know that equity does not currently exist across NYC's public schools. This Class Size Bill will only serve to further create a city of the haves and the have nots within an already heavily segregated school system by diverting funding and resources away from the high-need, struggling schools in low-income neighborhood school districts that need them the most, and will ultimately be more beneficial to higher-performing schools in more affluent school districts that are already of great quality and in high demand. All children deserve to attend a school that provides them with an excellent education regardless of where they live or how much money their parents make. However, the class size bill (as it's currently written) unfortunately does not help matters, since schools that will benefit the most (due to having a high % of classrooms that exceed the class size caps) are those in already high-performing districts located in wealthier neighborhoods. This bill will ultimately divert funding away from high-need schools in high-poverty or low-income school districts and funnel the majority of new funding and resources to the schools that need it least.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my written testimony as you make your decisions on what happened next.

Sincerely,

Crystal Rodriguez

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Cynthia Cummings, and I am writing to encourage the City Council and the Mayor to please reconsider implementing the class size bill in its current form. I am a parent of two NYC public school students who both attend Medgar Evers College Preparatory School (MECPS). MECPS is a great school in a district where high-performing public schools are an anomaly. As a result, MECPS overextends itself every year to admit more students than it has space for because the administrators at this school are committed to providing a great education to as many students as possible.

The classroom cap portion of this bill would make it impossible for many of MECPS' current and future students to attend this school because MECPS does not have the structural space to split classes up any smaller than they already are. That would mean less NYC students would have access to an education that should be provided in every school. Instead, this bill would make it so that more students would be forced to attend the zoned schools available to them that too often are mostly low-performing or failing schools. I understand that students tend to perform better in smaller classroom settings, but that can only be the case when there is a rich curriculum in place and a great teacher in front of the classroom .

Too many schools in my neighborhood school district are high-need, low-performing schools with a multitude of problems such as teacher shortages or challenges recruiting and retaining great teachers, low enrollment #s, a poor curriculum, a lack of extracurricular activities and programs designed to help students catch up or continue their education outside of their classes, etc. The schools in my neighborhood, many of which are high-need schools with a student population that come from low-income families/neighborhoods and are mostly students of color, need all the help they can get. Additional investments in these schools - more funding and resources, recruitment and retention of quality teachers, etc. - are desperately needed. Yet the class size bill/law in its current form, will likely do the opposite by funneling new resources to the city's better-off schools, not to the schools with the greatest need, like the schools in my neighborhood/school district.

I implore the Council and the Mayor to work together to make sure the class size mandate is reformed/changed so that it benefits high-need schools in struggling school district, especially in high-poverty schools) that need it the most. In its current form, I worry the cure is worse than the disease.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Cummings

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Cynthia Isaac, and I have a son that attends NYC public school in Brooklyn. I am deeply worried about the new class size law and how it will affect schools in my community.

My neighborhood school district has a large number of high-need, high poverty schools. They consistently face challenges with enrollment numbers and have far smaller shares of classes exceeding the caps set forth in the new class size bill/law than low-need, high-performing schools in wealthier neighborhood districts. Since many of the public schools in my community are high-need, high-poverty schools that already have smaller class sizes, they will benefit the least and likely be hurt by the new class size bill/law. In accordance with the new class size mandate on class size limitations, new resources will be directed to high-performing schools in more affluent school districts (that are in high demand and therefore have larger class sizes), not to the schools in my community, or those in other high-poverty neighborhood districts with the greatest need.

The class size reduction mandate may also have unintended consequences on teacher quality at schools in my neighborhood and at the neediest, high-poverty public schools both in Brooklyn and throughout NYC. NYC's public school system has been facing significant challenges with regard to the recruitment and retention of great teachers, especially in high-poverty schools in Brooklyn communities such as Bed-Stuy, Brownsville and East New York that have far more difficulty attracting talented teachers than high-performing community school districts that serve more affluent neighborhoods and families. Teacher shortages have a more profound impact on communities like mine that have a greater number of high-need schools with fewer quality teachers, since higher performing schools in the district may poach the few great teachers that our schools have on staff in order to meet their class size caps.

Lawmakers should be implementing policy that supports schools in high-need areas like mine. We shouldn't be taking great teachers away from high-poverty, struggling schools that need them the most, or forcing them to weaken the programs that support their students.

I urge the Council and the Mayor to push for revising the class size mandate/law to ensure that a much greater share of new funding and resources is reserved for the schools that need them the most.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Isaac

My name is Debbie Kross, and I am a parent of three students in NYC Public Schools. I am also the President of the Citywide Council on High Schools (“CCHS”) which represents over 300,000 students and their families in High Schools across the 5 boroughs. This makes the CCHS the largest Community Education Council in New York City.

We talked about “kids being kids” and enjoying all the wonderful things our public schools have to offer. I would like to talk to you about “teenagers being teenagers”.

Tonight, we heard eloquent testimonies from parents who highlighted the dangers of the Class Size mandate. On February 14, the CCHS passed a **Resolution calling the State Legislature to urgently amend the Class Size Law to focus its implementation on lower grades and to later phase in High Schools**. The impetus for this resolution was the CCHS’ careful analysis of data pertaining to enrollment and occupancy of high schools, as well as the ongoing dialogues the CCHS maintains with families, school administrators, and with the Office of Student Enrollment. I would like to give you just two key takeaways from this resolution.

FIRST, forcing small classes on high schools in NYC will have devastating consequences for these high schools which principals are assessing right now – by redirecting funds from special programs, electives and Advanced Placement classes towards core subjects. These special programs are why the high schools are popular and why the students are motivated and challenged in the first place... We have over 400 high schools with 700 different programs in NYC, and this Class Size mandate will destroy the unique character of each school.

SECOND, there will also be devastating consequences in terms of educational choices and quality of life for those students and their families. In highly sought-after programs, such as specialized high schools, performing arts schools, academically accelerated schools, as well as in zoned schools, enrollment will need to be drastically capped. Drastically means a reduction of 20 to 30% of the seats, possibly more in overcrowded schools, in order to comply with the mandate. And because of school overcrowding, particularly in Queens, this means increased travel time for our students. Teenagers need sleep!

The cost associated with implementing the mandate for high schools is enormous. What is particularly troublesome is that the mandate will result in a transfer of money towards schools and students who are already generally wealthier and show better performance – higher Regents’ passing grades, higher attendance, higher percentage of college attendance – and away from schools and students with higher economic need. We have heard it very clearly from the parents from East New York, Brownsville and BedStuy who testified tonight. How is this equitable?

I urge the City Council to look beyond the catch phrase that “small class size is good” and to focus on data and facts. I urge City Council to talk to the Citywide Council on High Schools, to NYCPs, and most importantly, to talk to school administrators. Dr. David Marmor, who co-chaired the Class Size Working Group, is the principal of the second largest High School in NYC,

is one of these administrators, the ones who have their “boots on the ground” and understand our high schools better than anyone else.

I urge you to work with the State Legislature to amend the law before we cause irreversible damage to our public High Schools and their communities in NYC.

Thank you.

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is DeWayne Murreld and I am the proud father of three children - my oldest has already graduated high school and is currently in college, and my two little ones - ten and eight years old - both attend a district public school in Far Rockaway - P.S. 105 - The Bay School. I have been an activist in my community for decades and I am currently a parent advocate and organizer for educational equity in NYC.

My children's school - P.S. 105 - The Bay School in Far Rockaway - lies within school district 27 in Queens. It is a high-poverty, high-need public school serving low-income families in Queens - 94% of its students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch - and serves mainly students and families of color - with 95% of the student population being either Black or Hispanic.

As an education activist, I've spent years fighting for a more equitable public school system given the education gap that exists between high-poverty, high-need school districts versus districts that serve more affluent students and families. This is why I was absolutely stunned to find out, after doing my research on the bill, that it would actually make the schools in districts such as district 27, even less appealing than they are today, further widening the achievement gap between higher poverty districts and more affluent ones.

This class size bill is well intentioned, and I agree with the mandate to not have our kids sitting in classes of 36 students, however, that's not the case in all districts across the city. As written, the blunt implementation of this law across all school communities, would exacerbate inequities within our school system.

In addition, I am extremely concerned that the class size mandate may have a negative impact on teacher quality in schools like P.S. 105. This law could lead to advantaged schools poaching teachers from high-need, struggling public schools. Furthermore, schools such as P.S. 105 struggle with enrollment numbers and many of them already have smaller class sizes. If the new class size law prioritizes funding and resources for lower-poverty schools with a larger share of classrooms above the caps, what will this mean for high-poverty, high-need schools in neighborhoods like mine, that may not qualify because they already have small class sizes?

New York should be making policy that supports schools in high-need areas like mine. We shouldn't be taking great teachers away from them, or forcing them to weaken the programs that support their students.

I urge the Council and the Mayor to make sure this law is implemented differently than what I've heard so far, it needs to take into account the nuanced circumstances and needs of different districts and schools. Our students have too much to lose.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

DeWayne Murreld

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Diane Mitchell, and I am the mother of several children that have either attended or currently attend NYC public schools. My family and I reside in the Bronx. Most of my children have already graduated, but my youngest, Jaivon, is currently in his senior year of high school. I am submitting this letter to express my concerns as a public school parent over NYC's recently passed class size bill.

As a longtime Bronx resident, public school parent and active parent advocate for educational equity in NYC, I've seen firsthand how public schools in my neighborhood district, and high-need school districts throughout the Bronx, have been getting worse and worse over the last three decades. The difference between the quality of public schools in low-income and high-poverty Bronx neighborhood districts versus low-need, wealthier NYC school districts, such as CSD 2, is absolutely staggering and the education/achievement gap is getting wider and wider with time. I am very concerned that this new class size bill will ultimately serve to make matters worse by exacerbating the already existing educational inequity that exists between low-income and more affluent neighborhood school districts in NYC.

The new class size mandate, as currently written, prioritizes public schools with higher enrollment numbers, funneling resources to schools that have the highest share of classrooms that exceed the mandate's new class size caps. These are schools that are in highest demand precisely because they are already high-performing, have the best teachers and high-quality instruction and programming. The new mandate/law, in its current form, would funnel even more funding and resources to these already high-performing schools, while the neediest schools in high-poverty, high-need neighborhood school districts stand to benefit the least.

Public schools in my neighborhood and other high-need, high-poverty districts in the Bronx, and throughout NYC's five boroughs, are in desperate need of additional investments, both for things like additional academic programming, high-impact tutoring and after-school programs, as well as facility upgrades, additional social and emotional programming, in-school wraparound services, etc. But, with NYC's public school budget already stretched thin, existing resources and any increases in state funding will have to be used to reduce class sizes at schools that are least in need in order to meet the caps laid out in the mandate. Furthermore, NYC's Department of Education may have to redirect money and resources that had previously been allotted for schools that enroll higher-need children, in order to comply with the mandate. The unfortunate reality is that not only will the neediest public schools in the Bronx, and in high-need school districts throughout NYC, probably not get much needed additional investments, but

there is a strong likelihood that many currently existing programs, extracurricular activities and other resources at these schools will ultimately have to be cut in order make room for cutting class sizes at low-need, higher-performing schools in more affluent neighborhood districts.

I would like to know why we would implement a law that forces school leaders and teachers in the Bronx to choose which programs to cut, to make room for a change in class sizes we don't need. Schools in the Bronx need more resources, extra-curricular activities, and better facilities. But that's not what this bill provides. It greatly benefits high performing schools, at the expense of NYC's low-performing, neediest schools.

Our students deserve better than that. I urge the Council and the Mayor to please reconsider this bill.

Thank you for taking time to review my testimony.

Sincerely,

Diane Mitchell

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Faith Snyder and I am a proud public school parent from Queens, NY. My daughter Danielle attends high school in Queens and is currently in the 10th grade. I'm also a passionate advocate for educational equity in our city.

Schools in my neighborhood have been underperforming for as long as I can remember. What I've learned over the years is that teacher quality is really what is most significant in a child's schooling. I don't think that anyone would deny that smaller class sizes can be of great help to a student and creates a more healthy learning environment for a child, fosters greater engagement and participation from students, allows a student to get more 1:1 time with their teacher and extra help with their work, etc. But, smaller class sizes alone won't help all that much if a child's teacher is inexperienced or ineffective.

I've learned that the most important factor in a child's schooling is teacher quality. A great teacher can make a big difference for a lot of students - especially ones in high-need school districts, like my daughter Danielle's district. And the ramifications for a child stuck in a classroom with a bad teacher, for even one year, can make or break a child's ability to be successful in their schooling going forward.

Today, there aren't enough great teachers to go around. At a time when NYC public schools face significant challenges with teacher shortages, implementing this bill may have real consequences for children attending high-need schools, especially in high-poverty neighborhood districts. Past studies have shown that in NYC, better teachers are more likely to migrate from lower-performing, high-need districts to more high-performing ones, which makes sense - if a teacher can switch to a higher-performing school and have an easier time managing their class while getting paid the same amount, why wouldn't a teacher choose the easier route? But, this problem would be greatly exacerbated if the class size bill is implemented as it's currently written. High-performing (low-need) schools in high demand (and therefore with a high % of classes over the new class size caps) will be forced to recruit new teachers wherever they can to maintain compliance with the class size mandate/caps. And at a time when there aren't enough quality teachers to go around, it's very likely that higher-performing schools, oftentimes in wealthier school districts, will poach the best teachers at high-need, low-performing schools, taking them away from the student in high-need schools/districts that need them the most.

It's hard to deny that large overcrowded classrooms can be a problem and an impediment to student learning and their ability to succeed academically. But, this particular class size bill (as it's currently written) attempts to solve it by creating an even worse problem.

If this law comes to New York City, I urge the Council and the Mayor to work together to make sure the class size mandate benefits high-need schools like those in my neighborhood of Jamaica, Queens. In its current form, I worry the cure is worse than the disease.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Faith Snyder

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Falesha Nettles. I am a proud single mother of six children. We live in Brownsville Brooklyn. All six of my children have gone through or are in the public school system and I have seen firsthand how it works. Now 2 of my twins are in charter school but my other kids are still in district school. I have been an active parent in my community and in my children's education for years. In my neighborhood of Brownsville (CSD 23), we have a high crime, high poverty, and low graduation rate. Most of our schools face serious challenges already with resources and funding allocation. I've spent years fighting for a more fair system between high-poverty, high-need school districts versus districts that serve more affluent students and families. This is why I believe the bill would actually make the schools in districts such as mine, even more vulnerable than they are today, widening the gap between higher poverty districts and more affluent ones.

This class size bill means well to not have our kids sitting in classes of 36 students, however, that's not the case in all districts across the city. As it is now, the implementation of this law across all school communities, would exacerbate inequities within our school system. Furthermore, I am extremely concerned that the class size mandate may have a negative impact on teacher quality at high-need schools in communities like Brownsville. This law could lead to schools in more well off neighborhoods stealing good teachers from high-need, struggling schools. If the new class size law prioritizes funding and resources for lower-poverty schools with a larger share of classrooms above the caps, what will this mean for high-poverty, high-need schools in neighborhoods like mine?

New York should not be making policies that weaken the programs that support their students. I urge the Council and the Mayor to make sure this law is implemented in such a way that prioritizes and benefits high-need schools in high-poverty neighborhood school districts such as CSD 23. However, the final version of the bill turns out, it's critical that it takes into account the circumstances and needs of different districts and schools. Our students have too much at stake!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Falesha Nettles

## Jennifer Dougherty Testimony on Class Size

To the education committee:

We understand that money can be finite in the educational system but one of the most important ways we can spend it is on making a plan to lower class size. The recommended class size for K is 20 students. My twins are in Kindergarten now at our local elementary school and each have 25 students. 25 five- and six-year-olds is a lot of energy and there is no aide or assistant teacher. Just to wrangle the students takes a lot of power on the teacher's part and I am afraid they have to resort to enforcing compliance most of the day rather than taking the time to individually respond to students' needs and do what they are meant to do most of all – teach! A large portion of my children's classmates are English language learners which only adds to the complications in trying to teach and respond to a class of such a large size. I know that if the class were limited to 20 it would be so much easier for the students to have individual attention and grow and learn as they should. Reducing class size is already the law but it doesn't seem like it is being implemented. I wanted to express my opinion as a parent.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Dougherty

I am a parent of a 2nd grader at PS 261 in Boerum Hill area of Brooklyn.

My kid's class size increased from approximately 21 kids per class to 31 kids per class this year. It's been a challenging year for my child and most of his classmates. This has greatly impacted their ability to learn and actively participate in the classroom.

They are meant to transition in the 2nd grade from learning to read to reading to learn. Many of them are behind and struggling to catch up. The kids end up having a lot of extra recesses and mass preps so the teachers can get through their lesson plans, students' work and assessments and catch up and prepare. Teachers at our school have reported that no matter how tight and well thought out a lesson plan is when a class is more than 22 kids, the children are getting a watered-down lesson plan.

If this is happening in Boerum Hill then it's certainly worse in other areas of Brooklyn and the city. We must implement the state law here in NYC. We must follow through on the phase-in plan. Our children deserve a good education and educational equity. The city and state must be held accountable for lowering class sizes and they must stay committed to the equitable funding of our NYC public school system.

Countless studies show that students with smaller classes do better in every way measured – higher test scores, better grades, fewer disciplinary problems, and an increased likelihood of graduating high school, attending college, and getting a STEM degree.

Smaller classes especially benefit students from disadvantaged backgrounds. • Especially since the pandemic, many students need more emotional connection and support that only a smaller class can provide.

According to a 2008 survey, NYC principals said that class sizes should be no more than 20 students in grades K-3, 22-23 students in 4th -5 th grade, 24-25 students in 6th -8 th grades, and 25 students in high school for a quality education – very close to the new limits in the state class size law.

Teachers overwhelmingly agree that reducing class sizes is the best way to improve public schools whenever they are offered that option in surveys.

No more budget cuts! No more cuts to the Capital Plan.

We need more teachers, not less. There is funding for smaller class sizes. The DOE should tap into the \$1.3 billion in additional state funding received for smaller class sizes. NYC has a \$2 billion rainy day fund. We don't need floating swimming pools.

The children of NYC deserve a learning environment where they have the opportunity to develop to their full potential in a safe, warm, and welcoming atmosphere. They need to be able to be active class participants. In smaller classes, our students will be challenged, experience success, become excited about learning, and be motivated to remain learners throughout their lives.

Each kid is an individual with unique needs, interests, learning styles, and potential. We need to recognize and value these differences, get to know each individual student and meet the needs of each of them.

You need to create an environment that fosters life-long learning. This attitude is promoted by creating smaller environments that encourage students' natural curiosity so they may develop an excitement for learning. Students need the opportunity to experience hands-on, real-life learning experiences that will challenge, motivate, and light a passion for learning.

Smaller class sizes are the #1 concern of parents in our city. I hope you will begin to heed the law and start implementing the phase-in plan. Please listen to the parents, educators, and the research and do what's best for the children and school communities. The kids deserve their right to a solid and sound quality education, and you are keeping them from it.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Patrick

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Linda Scott, and I have a grandson who attends kindergarten in Crown Heights. The majority of children in my grandson's school come from low-income families. Most of the classes at my grandson's school have small class sizes already. So, I am concerned as to what this will mean for my grandson's school and other high-need schools within high-poverty neighborhood school districts in Brooklyn and throughout NYC. As it's currently written, the new class size mandate will primarily benefit schools with overcrowded classrooms, or those with a greater share of classes over the new class size caps. From the looks of it, my grandson's school, as well as numerous other schools in neighboring districts serving low-income Brooklyn families (that already have small class sizes), stand to benefit the least from this new law.

Most schools with large class sizes are in districts that are already well-resourced, low-need districts serving wealthier families/communities. Will they have to take resources away from low-income schools like my grandson's school to make implementation of the class size reduction mandate work? In its current form, the new class size law/mandate appears to prioritize high-performing, low-need schools in affluent neighborhood school districts, diverting funds and resources away from schools like my grandson's school, that are in desperate need of additional investment and resources.

I believe the law should be revised so that it prioritizes new resources for NYC's highest-poverty, neediest public schools and ensures that the results of its implementation do not hurt already struggling schools. I hope the City Council and the Mayor will make a concerted effort to revise this law.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Linda Scott

Esteemed NYC Council,

My name is Maggie Sanchez. I'm a Public Advocate Appointee to the Citywide Council on Special Education and I am speaking on my personal capacity. As a parent of a student with Autism. I'm here to speak on the Class Size Law passed in 2022 and how this law benefits students like my child and others. As a former public school student I've experienced myself how large class sizes can impede students' learning, and I was in general education. Now imagine how the experience is for students with disabilities who have Auditory Processing Disorder or other diagnoses, who already have a difficult time navigating crowded spaces. How can those students be expected to meaningfully learn in classrooms of over 30-40 students? It's just too overwhelming. It is for my child and for many others as well. Right now, there are students in classrooms of 40 students or more. Having to sit on the floor due to lack of available desks for them to learn. Many of them are Multilingual Learners. That is why the Class Size Law is so important. That is why taking measures to enable the Department of Education to abide by the Class Size Law is critically important. Please, I beg of you to hold the Mayor and Department of Education accountable on this issue and the cuts to education he's been implementing. That has been making it extremely difficult for students and schools across NYC.

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Marcine Scurlock and I am a concerned grandparent from the Bronx. My granddaughter is currently in the 4th grade attending P.S. 204 - Morris Heights, a Bronx district school in CSD 9. I have always been very active in my grandchildren's schooling and have been a staunch advocate for educational equity in NYC for years. As an advocate for both my own grandchildren as well as all Bronx students and families, I'm very aware of the stark contrast in quality between the schools in low-income neighborhood districts like Morris Heights, Mt. Eden and other high-need school districts in the Bronx versus those in more affluent, high-performing school districts. I am deeply concerned that this new class size bill will make this contrast even worse.

My granddaughter's school (P.S. 204 - Morris Heights) is considered to be one of the highest-poverty schools in the area (with an "economic need index" score/percentage of 92%). Public schools in the Bronx CSD 9, as well as in numerous other high-poverty, high need NYC school districts, constantly struggle with student enrollment numbers, and most of them already have smaller class sizes (e.g., at my granddaughter's school, P.S. 204 - Morris Heights, 30% of classes are over the new class size caps, which is even lower than the overall average share of classes over the cap for all public schools combined that are considered to be within the city's highest-poverty schools range, according to a Chalkbeat analysis). Chalkbeat's analysis of city data from last school year shows that at the city's highest poverty schools, only 38% of classrooms are larger than the new caps allow, in contrast to the city's low- to mid-poverty schools, where nearly 70% of classrooms are above the caps.

If the new class size law prioritizes funding and resources for lower-poverty schools with a larger share of classrooms above the caps, what will this mean for high-poverty, high-need schools like P.S. 204, and the numerous other schools with a similar share of classes over the caps, located in high-need districts such as my daughter's school district (CSD 9)? This bill does not provide more resources to schools that need it most. Instead, it will funnel even more resources toward schools that are already well-off and high-performing.

Additionally, I am extremely concerned that the class size reduction mandate will have a negative impact on teacher quality at schools like P.S. 204 where my granddaughter attends. My experience as a long-time education advocate and parent/grandparent having to overcome the many challenges that are all too familiar to parents attempting to navigate NYC's public school system, has taught me that resources for our public schools are only finite, and that funding and resources would have to be reshuffled to make the

new class size mandate/bill work as it's currently written. High-performing schools in more affluent, low-need school districts with the highest share of classes over the caps, will have to get additional teachers from somewhere in order to comply with the class size mandate, and at a time when our public schools are facing serious teacher shortages. These new class size caps could exacerbate teacher shortages in high-need schools by creating a hiring spree that would encourage advantaged schools to poach teachers from schools like P.S. 204 and other schools in similar circumstances.

Why would we implement policies that incentivize high-performing schools to poach the best teachers from low-performing ones? And why aren't lawmakers that are hastily working to implement this new bill, first talking and listening to families in high-poverty communities like Morris Heights about what our priorities are for our schools? Because if they did, smaller class sizes would not be it. The biggest priority for families in my neighborhood would be recruiting and retaining great teachers at our public schools and those NYC schools that need them the most, not smaller class sizes.

Our students deserve better. I urge the Council and the Mayor to reconsider, or at the least, make a greater effort to revamp a bill that in its current form will likely result in NYC's neediest schools benefitting the least.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Marcine Scurlock

March 1, 2024

My name is Marina Chumachenko. As a parent of three students and an educator, I would like to testify on the importance of reducing class sizes and complying with the law, Chapter 556 of the Laws of 2022.

The stand for supporting the current trend of inaction related to the class size reduction can only come from the perspective that work of educators is only instruction delivery. Academic and particularly, classroom life goes beyond delivering instruction to students. It is also ensuring that students receive differentiation they deserve. Teacher-student interaction is also about learning your students and building relationships with them and their families. This cannot be achieved with classes filled to their current capacities. Each student comes to school with a story, and it needs to be heard by the teacher or other meaningful adult at school. With experience from high-need schools, I can say with confidence that we may never hear our most needy students' voices because they are lost in the crowd.

One of my children's teachers told me during a parent-teacher conference two years ago (the first post-COVID all-in-person school year) that it was the first year in her over twenty-year career that her class had 26 students and that it was her best school year with the students. She shared that a smaller class made her work more enjoyable and productive and allowed her to build stronger relationships with children and their families, a statement any educator would like to relate to and a caregiver to hear. This is a truly strong testimony to support smaller class sizes.

Moreover, the current state of events demonstrates to student families, educators, and general public that it is acceptable to violate the law—a dangerous stance. It undermines the belief in Chancellor Banks's Vision for Transforming and Building Trust in NYC Public Schools, which was meant to revive the public trust in NYC Schools education. According to Chancellor Banks's [statement](#), "Parents know their children...We will be engaging with families in policy creation and implementation procedures at all levels. I do not want to create policy where families have not been part of the process." Meanwhile, the families' voices keep losing the battle to ineffective planning and poor vision or reluctance to consider alternative means of class reduction.

The [testimony](#) of Class Size Matters before the City Council provides a thorough analysis of the NYS Schools data related to the current class sizes and the need to be transparent about how the data are reported. Unless the class size data are desegregated on the types of classes, we do not have a clear picture on the true state of events, and the public opinion can be easily manipulated by numbers that do not represent facts.

Let's remember that the current problems in NYC Schools have been growing under current conditions of overcrowded classes, and this needs to be changed through a dialogue and inclusion of all voices and consideration of all options to comply with the law and revive the belief that we can make public education better.

Sincerely,  
Marina Chumachenko

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Maureen Gibbs and I have a daughter in the 8th grade that attends junior high school in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. I am submitting this written testimony to express my concerns about NYC's new class size mandate.

When I first heard about a bill being introduced in Albany designed to reduce class sizes across the board in NYC's public schools, I was initially pleased and excited to hear the news. I think nearly everyone can agree that smaller class sizes are a good thing and beneficial to students. I equate smaller class sizes with better learning environments and opportunities for students.

However, after doing my research and looking into the details and nuances of the bill, I was very disappointed to discover how flawed the bill was and about its many drawbacks. I was especially disturbed to find out about how the new class size caps outlined in the bill could lead to devastating effects on struggling, high-need schools like many of the schools in my neighborhood of Crown Heights as well as numerous other high-poverty school districts throughout Brooklyn. The new class size law, as it's currently written, actually benefits lower-need schools in wealthier districts that are already high-performing, at the expense of high-need, high-poverty schools that need greater resources and support the most. Because schools in my neighborhood, that consistently face challenges with low student enrollment numbers, already have small class sizes, students and families enrolled at these schools actually stand to benefit the least. And to add insult to injury, the class size reduction mandate very well may hurt high-need schools like mine that serve disadvantaged communities and student populations that are the neediest - new resources would be funneled not to the schools that have the greatest support needs or lowest test scores, but instead to some of the city's better-off schools in more affluent neighborhood districts that are already high-performing.

The implementation of the class size bill/law in its current form would be tremendous injustice for low-income communities like Crown Heights and Bed-Stuy that mainly serve students of color. High-need schools serving students and families in high-poverty or lower-income neighborhood districts need all the resources and support they can get.

The class size caps as outlined in the new class reduction mandate will also have negative effects on teacher quality in schools in my neighborhood of Crown Heights and Bed-Stuy. NYC's public school system is already facing significant teacher shortages. The schools in high demand that have the highest

enrollment numbers and largest share of classes over the cap will be forced to undergo a teacher hiring spree in order to comply with the new class size caps at a time where teacher shortages are a major issue for NYC public schools. They're going to have to get additional qualified teachers from somewhere. This will most likely lead to higher performing schools poaching the best teachers from high-need, lower-performing schools that already face major challenges with retaining great teachers and that desperately need all the quality teachers they can get. Ultimately, the new law will most likely drive great teachers away from high-need schools in high-poverty or low-income neighborhood districts, and into the arms of wealthier ones, where the students need them the least.

This new law has the potential to contribute to further neglect of struggling, high-need schools in districts that need the most help like CSD 16, CSD 17, and a number of other neighboring Brooklyn school districts, while benefiting schools in wealthier districts where students are already succeeding. This is the reason why I feel the new class size law must be reconsidered or revised to ensure that funding, resources and great teachers aren't diverted away from the schools that need them the most. Low income schools are already struggling and we don't need a law to make things worse.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maureen Gibbs

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Melvin Thomas. I am submitting this written testimony to voice my concerns about the implementation of NYC's new class size mandate. I recall my days as a public school student in Staten Island. Large class sizes were very common back then and I remember a lot of my classes were overcrowded with only one teacher per classroom. Although I'm sure it would have helped me and my fellow classmates if we had smaller class sizes in general, we were still able to learn and do well in the classes with the best teachers, regardless of whether or not the class was overcrowded.

My experience has taught me that the most important factor in a child's ability to do well in school is the quality of their teachers. The great teachers that made the most difference in my days as a public school student helped us learn and made a profound impact on our education and ability to be successful in school, despite having large class sizes. The best teachers I remember knew how to teach us well and manage the class, even with an overcrowded classroom.

I can recall one of my best teachers that really cared about us and kept each of us from being singled out or labeled as slow or as a troubled student. After she would teach a lesson and we would break to do classwork or activities related to that day's lesson, individually or in small groups, she would take those students who were struggling off to the side to give them extra help. Even while she was helping the students who needed extra attention and the rest of us were on our own, and supposed to be focusing on the class activities for the day, she never lost control of the class. If anybody dared to goof off or got distracted from their work, she would just give you a look, and you knew you better get back to work. Everyone in the class knew that there was no room to fool around in her class.

Having a quality teacher in the classroom makes a world of difference. The public schools in communities like mine, that serve low-income families and are often struggling schools, have a lot of inexperienced or unqualified teachers. There are some great teachers at these schools. But, they are too often hard to come by at high-need, high-poverty schools. This is why I'm very concerned about NYC's new class size law. Hiring enough new teachers to ultimately meet the new class size caps in the law is going to be extremely challenging, especially now when NYC public schools are facing rising teacher turnover. A lot of the public schools in NYC that are the most overcrowded (i.e., have the highest percentage of classes over the new class size caps), are already great schools that have the best teachers. Often the reason these schools are overcrowded is because they are great schools and are in high demand. Every parent wants to get their child into those schools. At a time when the NYC public school system already has a big

problem with teacher shortages, these schools that are already great schools with the best teachers, but also have the largest share of overcrowded classrooms, will be forced to poach teachers from other schools in order to meet the new class size caps. Unfortunately, this often means recruiting the best teachers from high-need, struggling schools in low-income neighborhoods like mine. The schools in communities like mine will be negatively impacted the most, since their best teachers may very well leave the schools for positions at higher-performing schools because they will get paid the same and have a much easier job.

Whether a school has small class sizes or big class sizes is not the real problem. The main problem is that NYC public schools, especially in high-poverty, high need districts, need more quality teachers that are qualified to teach our kids.

Members of the NYC Council's Committee on Education and Mr. Mayor - please reconsider implementing this new law, that will ultimately do more harm to our kids than good.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Melvin Thomas

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Rondell Elliott and I am the father of Kaiden Elliott, a 1st grade student attending NYC public school in Harlem. I've been a long-time parent advocate for educational equity in NYC and have spent years fighting to make our public school system more equitable. The bill we're talking about today may be well intentioned. But, not only is it flawed and misguided, it may do more harm than good.

My experience as a parent and education advocate has taught me that teacher quality is the most important factor in a child's education. Whether or not a child has a great teacher can make all the difference in the world for a student - it may determine whether or not a student graduates college-ready and able to pursue a degree, their professional/career trajectory, and their overall quality of life. A great teacher is not necessarily easy to come by for a student from a low-income community attending a struggling public school, especially one in a high-need school district, like Kaiden.

Today, our school system faces consistent teacher shortages and difficulties recruiting and retaining enough quality teachers. High-need schools, like the one Kaiden attends, often have a high percentage of new or inexperienced teachers. Not only does the new class size bill not address this issue, the way it is currently written would actually serve to make the problem worse. In order to keep in compliance with the new class size caps, low-need, higher performing schools in more well-off school districts may be incentivized to poach the best teachers from lower-performing, high need schools where they're needed the most. It will leave schools like Kaiden's less equipped to close the achievement gap than they are today.

If this law comes to New York City, I urge the Council and the Mayor to work together to make sure it prioritizes and benefits schools in neighborhood school districts that are in most need of additional support and resources. In its current form, I worry the new bill will do more harm than good.

Thank you for your consideration..

Sincerely,

Rondell Elliott

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Shelevya Pearson and I am a proud public school parent from Brownsville, Brooklyn. My daughter Saki is in 11th grade at the Urban Assembly of Arts and Music. I'm also a passionate advocate for educational equity in our city.

I have spent years fighting to make our schools fairer and more equal. The bill we're talking about today may be well intentioned, but make no mistake: it does the opposite.

I've learned that the most important ingredient in a fair school system is teacher quality. A good teacher can make all the difference for a student - especially one in a high-need district, like Saki. And an inexperienced, ineffective teacher can hold students back from their full potential.

Today, there aren't enough great teachers to go around. In fact, only 50% of UAMA's teachers have three or more years of teaching experience. But instead of solving that problem, this bill makes it worse. By decreasing class sizes across the board, it will encourage wealthy, low-need schools to poach the best teachers away from UAMA. It will leave schools like Saki's less equipped to close the achievement gap than they are today.

It's true: large class sizes are a problem. But this bill tries to solve it by creating an even worse one.

If this law comes to New York City, I urge the Council and the Mayor to work together to make sure it benefits schools like UAMA in neighborhoods like Brownsville. In its current form, I worry the cure is worse than the disease.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shelevya Pearson

February 28, 2024

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing in support of the new small class size law. I am a Queens parent and both of my children had the privilege to attend a NYCPS district elementary school that has small class sizes. District schools are not required to take in zoned students during the school year and therefore after an initial kindergarten class of 25 (they are mandated to take in students from the wait list to keep to 25 children), the consecutive grades and their classes become smaller and smaller when over time students move away and leave the school. My oldest daughter, now in a new middle school where the school year started off with a class size of 40 (now down to 32), had the privilege to be in 4<sup>th</sup> grade in an ICT class of 16 students with two teachers. I don't need to tell you how well the kids did overall and during the NY State Exams! This was only possible because of a small grade of 33 children required to split the grade into two classes. The next year after 2 kids left, my daughter's grade had to be downsized to one class of 31 students – it was quite a big change for them! My youngest daughter is currently enjoying her 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class with 22 other students.

I strongly believe that smaller class sizes are the best way to improve education. Children can easily bond with each other and it is much easier for teachers to support each child individually than having to manage a class of 32. My children have/had the privilege to be in small classes and I strongly feel that every child should have the same opportunity.

I am also the Queens Borough President's Appointee for CEC 28 and I have heard from parents who are very concerned about unintended consequences because the NYCPS is not making any moves to prepare for the upcoming changes. As you may well be aware of, Queens has too few schools and seats for students. On high school level, some high schools are forced to teach in double shifts.

It's important to start planning NOW. We need more trained and qualified teachers. We urgently need more space. New schools must be constructed right now as we are speaking as this is a time-consuming process. And we need financial resources so existing programs can continue to be offered.

When checking in with parents who are against the small class size law, all of them agree that small classes are beneficial to a better learning environment for students, no matter which grade level. They admit that they are against the new law because they don't have trust in the NYCPS to implement it in the way it should be done. Their worry is that schools will be forced to decline students due to space capacity. These concerns are legitimate as the NYCPS has proven to not always think things through.

On a side note, I was not raised and educated in the United States. I went to public school in Germany, where I learned in classes as small as 8 students (high school French class grade 12 and 13). For years I was in a high school class of 16 students (grade 9 through 11). I strongly believe that the new small class size law is something that can be implemented but there needs to be willingness and commitment to invest in our children. If my insignificant and little middle-class German town can afford to have small class sizes, a rich world-class city like NYC surely can do the same if not better. The real question is: how much money are we willing to invest in our children?

I do hope that with your support we can implement the new small class size law in a timely and responsible manner the way it was intended without having to close down programs and denying access to students who need it.

Thank you for your time and your support.

Respectfully,  
Simone Dornbach

Good afternoon Chair Joseph and members of the Education Committee

My name is Stephen Stowe. I am President of the Community Education Council in District 20 Brooklyn. And I served on the class size working group.

After hearing a lot of opposing comments here today, it's no secret that this is a controversial issue. I'm very proud of a possible compromise from our CEC that could bring many groups. In January our CEC approved a resolution by a vote of 8-1 calling on the State Legislature to amend the Class Size Law. We ask to extend the implementation timeline to 10 years from 5 years. To only implement the law in grades K-3, in line with the actual research that has been conducted. And finally, we recommend only implementing the law in schools which need it most – those that are both low income and low academic performance.

The remaining comments are my own.

I have spoken to many Principals. They have the data and they know the impact the Law will have on their school. Painful trade offs are about to occur. The first casualty will be specialty offerings. Art rooms, dance rooms, science labs, music rooms, maker labs, greenhouses will be repurposed into general education classes. But this doesn't solve the problem at many schools. For these schools, it will be time to tell many families zoned for their school that they can no longer attend.

In comparison to the very powerful United Federation of Teachers, I want to uplift the voices of parent stakeholder groups. Especially Parents of kids not yet in the system. But who have moved to a school zone they like. In the next few years, Many of these parents are going to be informed they can not attend their local school but instead must go to another school. And it is not as simple as opening new programs in nearby underutilized schools. In many districts like my own, over 75% of schools are over the cap. In many cases the closest underutilized school is miles away. This will be especially difficult for many working immigrant families whose children are brought to school by grandparents.

Another group of stakeholders that gets hurt very badly by this law are Students in schools which have lower academic performance. Many of these schools are also under enrolled. It couldn't be more simple - If these schools are under enrolled, they will see very little benefit from a law designed to send more teachers and build more schools in the most crowded areas. Teachers throughout the city will transfer to Districts in northeast Queens, south BK and Staten Island. Left behind will be central Brooklyn and the Bronx. If you care about educational equity and if you care about focusing our resources on our students whose academic needs are the highest, you should be very concerned about this law.

California tried class size reduction years ago. They later abandoned it. A consortium of policy think tanks evaluated the program<sup>1</sup> and wrote the following "Implementation of CSR occurred rapidly, although it lagged in schools serving minority and low-income students..." due to lack of space.

They said "Our analyses of the relationship of CSR to student achievement were inconclusive".

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<sup>1</sup> [Exec Summary: What we have learned about K-3 Class Size Reduction in CA \(9/02\) \(edsources.org\)](https://www.edsource.org/ExecSummary/What-we-have-learned-about-K-3-Class-Size-Reduction-in-CA-9-02)

They said “CSR was associated with declines in teacher qualifications and a more inequitable distribution of credentialed teachers...”

They also wrote “Classroom space and dollars were taken from other programs to support CSR”

In addition, the Public Policy Institute of CA writes that the learning gains are wiped out by the decline in teacher quality.

“Unfortunately, these schools tended to suffer the largest deterioration in teacher quality as measured by experience and certification. A better approach to class size reduction would have been to reduce class sizes in a subset of schools each year, starting with low-performing schools serving high-poverty populations. This would have limited the departure of teachers for newly created jobs in suburban schools, lessened the overall competition for new teachers, and reduced inequality in academic performance.”

This is exactly what we recommend in the CEC 20 resolution. A careful phased approach.

Evidence is important and I want to finish by putting on the record some counterpoints to some statements made about the research on class size.

Any of the successful studies on class size have brought class sizes down to 15 including the Wisconsin study and Tennessee studies. That is not contemplated by the NY law.

In addition, there have been no true, experimental studies on class size in MS or HS. It is an overreach to apply this unfunded mandate to the entire city every grade, every school all at once.

Michael Gilrhaine’s name was mentioned. There should have been more context to those comments. But “when you reduce class sizes you’re going to have a trade-off because you need to bring in new teachers — and that might have its own independent effect.”

The Working Group’s recommendations do not address these issues. The recommendations in the final report are in many cases already being done, are vague or superfluous. With a notable exception of the recommendation to cap enrollment at schools which is the most parent unfriendly recommendation.

The Law was passed very quickly in 2022 with no hearings or deliberations. It relies on a popular policy but was written with no consideration of the practical impact on NYC schools. With the evidence strongly mixed on class size impact, and significant financial and operational complexities the only responsible course of action is to reform the law. Go slow.

I ask for your support to lobby Albany to reform the law. Thank you.

**Council Officers**

**Council Members**

<b>President</b>	Stephen Stowe
<b>First Vice President</b>	John Ricottone
<b>Second Vice President</b>	Elizabeth Chan (IEP Rep)
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Xiaoqiong (Joyce) Xie
<b>Treasurer</b>	Meifang (Junmi) Chen



Wenming (Angie) Chen	Tamara Stern (BP Rep)
Yanqing (Angi) Chen	Kevin Zhao
Maya Rozenblat (ELL Rep)	

Resolution 7  
(SY23-24)

**Resolution Calling for the State Legislature to Amend the Class Size Law**

**Approved by a vote of 8-1 on January 10, 2023**

- |                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Stephen Stowe - Yes</b>         | <b>6. Wenming (Angie) Chen - Yes</b> |
| <b>2. John Ricottone - Yes</b>        | <b>7. Yanqing (Angi) Chen - Yes</b>  |
| <b>3. Elizabeth Chan - Yes</b>        | <b>8. Maya Rozenblat - Excused</b>   |
| <b>4. Xiaoqiong (Joyce) Xie - Yes</b> | <b>9. Tamara Stern - No</b>          |
| <b>5. Meifang (Junmi) Chen - Yes</b>  | <b>10. Kevin Zhao - Yes</b>          |

**Sponsor: Stephen Stowe**

**Co-sponsor(s): John Ricottone, Xiaoqiong (Joyce) Xie**

**WHEREAS**, in June 2022, the New York State Legislature passed Chapter 556 of the Laws of 2022, legislated as Senate Bill 9460 and otherwise known as the Class Size Law (“The Law”) which would require that New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) cap class sizes in all K-12 schools in New York City. In September 2022, Governor Hochul signed the bill into law.

**WHEREAS**, parents (including those who vote in support of this resolution) want smaller class sizes and recognize the potentially improved classroom environment that can result. However, it is a mistake to impose an unfunded mandate across NYCPS as done by the Law. Resources are limited and trade-offs will have to be made to implement the Law as currently written. These trade-offs will have many negative unintended consequences for District 20 families.

**WHEREAS**, the law is to be implemented over a 5 year period, beginning this School Year 2023 - 2024 and ending in School Year 2027 - 2028 when the NYCPS is supposed to be fully compliant with the law.

**WHEREAS**, the NYCPS established a working group to deliver recommendations on implementing the Law. That group’s report can be found [here](#)<sup>1</sup>. Nine individuals in the working group dissented from the report. Six parent dissenters published their own report with recommendations which can be found [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

**WHEREAS**, the cost of non-compliance with the law is suspension of some or all of the Contract For Excellence (C4E) annual funding received from the State of New York. C4E funding is authorized at a maximum of \$756 million which represents approximately 2% of the NYCPS Fiscal 2023 - 2024 budget.

**WHEREAS**, the vast majority of class size reduction (CSR) efforts have shown limited or no impact on student learning. This is supported both by empirical evidence and academic research.

**WHEREAS**, Large scale class size reduction efforts in California and Florida suggest that class size does not have a strong predictive impact on academic outcomes. In New York City, the most over-crowded classes have the highest rates of proficiency on State ELA and Math exams. And the least crowded classes have the lowest rates of proficiency.

- In California, the state commissioned a research consortium to evaluate the effectiveness of the CSR effort in that state. The commission found that “analysis of the relationship of CSR to student achievement were inconclusive”, “CSR was associated with a decline in teacher qualifications and a more inequitable distribution of credentialed teachers”, “Classroom space and dollars were taken from other programs to support CSR”<sup>3</sup>. The Public Policy Institute of California found that any gains from smaller class sizes were offset by the decline in teacher quality<sup>4</sup> and the entire initiative was ultimately abandoned due partly to increasing costs<sup>5</sup>.
- In Florida, an analysis published in the [Economics of Education Review](#) found that “The results from both the district- and school-level analyses indicate that mandated CSR in Florida had little, if any, effect on student achievement”<sup>6</sup>.
- In New York City, the most over-crowded classes have the highest rates of proficiency on State ELA and Math exams. And the least crowded classes have the lowest rates of proficiency. This strongly suggests that class size does not have a strong predictive impact on academic outcomes<sup>7</sup>.

**WHEREAS**, numerous academic studies and policy commentaries have concluded that class size is a relatively weak type of academic intervention.

- A meta-analysis of 127 studies examining the impact of smaller classes on learning outcomes found that “Overall, the evidence suggests at best a small effect on reading achievement. There is a negative, but statistically insignificant, effect on mathematics”<sup>8</sup>.
- Stanford University’s Eric Hanushek finds that “the surprising finding is that the evidence does not offer much reason to expect a systematic effect from overall class size reduction policies”<sup>9</sup>
- The Brookings Institute writes that “Class-size reduction has been shown to work for some students in some grades in some states and countries, but its impact has been found to be mixed or not discernable

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<sup>1</sup> [Class Size Working Group Report\\_Final.docx.pdf - Google Drive](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Class Size WG Minority Report.pdf - Google Drive](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://edsources.org/wp-content/publications/CSRSummaryFinal.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ppic.org/publication/class-size-reduction-teacher-quality-and-academic-achievement-in-california-public-elementary-schools/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://edsources.org/2012/class-size-reduction-program-continues-to-unravel/8730>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0272775712000271#:~:text=Highlights,any%2C%20effect%20on%20student%20achievement>

<sup>7</sup> [2022-23 Class Size Cap Analysis Data - wMetrics - toWorking Group - 9.6.23.xlsx - Google Sheets](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Small class sizes for improving student achievement in primary and secondary schools: a systematic review - Filges - 2018 - Campbell Systematic Reviews - Wiley Online Library](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Some Findings from an Independent Investigation of the Tennessee STAR Experiment and from Other Investigations of Class Size Effects \(stanford.edu\)](#)

in other settings and circumstances that seem similar. It is very expensive. The costs and benefits of class-size mandates need to be carefully weighed against all of the alternatives when difficult decisions must be made”<sup>10</sup>.

**WHEREAS**, there has been almost no research conducted on the impact of class size at the middle and high school levels.

**WHEREAS**, the law will be very expensive to implement and there is no additional funding provided by either the State or City to implement the law. Estimates have been provided by Independent Budget Office (\$1.6 - 1.9 billion annual cost)<sup>11</sup>, the NYCPS (\$1.3 - 1.9 billion annual cost)<sup>12</sup> and a dissenting group of members from the NYCPS Class Size Working Group (\$2.2 billion annual cost; \$17 - 22 billion capital costs)<sup>13</sup>. The NYCPS annual total budget is \$37.5 billion this year. The final phase-in of Foundation Aid funding was completed in the current school year 2023-2024<sup>14</sup> and the NYCPS has not yet started implementing the Law.

**WHEREAS**, the School Construction Authority is currently planning to complete 24 new schools to be ready for the Fall of 2024. In the Fall of 2025, there are 10 schools planned to open<sup>15</sup>. However, the NYCPS estimates that approximately 160 - 200 new schools will need to be built to meet compliance with the law<sup>16</sup>. This implies the construction of 32 - 40 new schools a year, a rate of construction significantly above the current rate.

**WHEREAS**, the Law will require hiring approximately 10,000 - 12,000 additional teachers. NYCPS currently employs 76,000 teachers so the additional hiring would represent a 13 - 16% increase in the current teacher workforce. This does not include replacing the 4,000 - 4,500 who annually retire or leave the NYCPS<sup>17</sup>. This amount of new hiring will be especially difficult given the nationwide shortage of qualified teachers<sup>18</sup>.

**WHEREAS**, the Law will reduce equity in the NYCPS. The Law requires the class size caps to be implemented at all schools regardless of the economic need or academic performance. As NYCPS data shows, 40% of the classes over the mandated caps are in the wealthiest quartile. Conversely, only 11% of the classes which exceed the caps are in the lowest income quartile. Likewise, 38% of classes over the caps are in the highest performing academic quartile. And only 11% of classes exceeding the caps are in the lowest performing academic quartile<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, the majority of new teaching hires and new school buildings to achieve compliance with the Law will be done in Districts which are wealthier and have higher rates of academic proficiency. The Urban Institute has noted this in a recent report, citing that most of the reductions would occur in higher income and predominantly white and Asian schools<sup>20</sup>.

**WHEREAS**, the Law will likely lead to increased travel times for many NYCPS families. The NYCPS Class Size Working Group has recommended limiting enrollment at schools that can not meet the Law’s mandate<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> [Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy | Brookings](#)

<sup>11</sup> [how-would-the-new-limits-to-class-sizes-affect-new-york-city-schools-july-2023.pdf \(nyc.ny.us\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> [CSWG - Meeting #9 11.2.23 Public.pdf - Google Drive](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Class Size Law Financial Forecast \(Final\).xlsx - Google Sheets](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Education Department, State | Agency Appropriations | FY 2024 Executive Budget \(ny.gov\)](#)

<sup>15</sup> [11012023\\_25\\_29\\_CapitalPlan.pdf \(windows.net\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> [CSWG - Meeting #5 08.09.23 PUBLIC.pdf - Google Drive](#)

<sup>17</sup> [CSWG - Meeting #4 07.12.23\\_for public posting.pdf - Google Drive](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Teacher shortages sweep nation as 86% of schools struggle with hiring \(usatoday.com\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [2022-23 Class Size Cap Analysis Data - wMetrics - toWorking Group - 9.6.23.xlsx - Google Sheets](#)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/class-size-reductions-may-be-inequitably-distributed-under-new-mandate-nyc>

<sup>21</sup> [Class Size Working Group Report\\_Final.docx.pdf - Google Drive](#)

For schools which are very popular, this will mean a large number of families would be forced to attend another school, likely outside of their current zone. In Districts with many over-enrolled schools, this will mean significantly increased travel times as there may be no under-enrolled schools in close proximity and many other over-enrolled schools all trying to place students at new schools. In the case of District 20, there are a significant percentage of Elementary Schools in which between 75-100% of the classes are over the caps, especially in the south-central part of our District (Appendix 1).

**WHEREAS**, the Law will likely reduce the number of specialized academic offerings in many schools. For example, if a school has 125 third graders, they can now be in 4 classrooms with 4 teachers. However, under the new Law, they would need to be distributed into 7 classrooms, a 75% increase in the number of classrooms required. Many schools may consider reducing dedicated specialty classroom spaces currently serving arts, music, science lab and dance, to name a few. In addition, if the number of general education classes is increasing in a school, there will be fewer specialized classes such as Advanced Placement or Bilingual classes, as well as fewer seats in Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes for students with disabilities. While it might be possible to retain some of these specialized classes, the number of students attending each class would decrease in line with the cap. And it is unlikely the school would be able to create a second class given the difficulty finding teachers in many specialized fields and the need to maximize all available space for general education classes.

**WHEREAS**, the Law represents a shift in governing power toward the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and to a lesser extent, the Council of School Administrators and Supervisors (CSA). Exemptions to the Law are permitted for the following conditions: “(1) space; (2) over-enrolled students; (3) license area shortages; and (4) severe economic distress,”<sup>22</sup> but require the NYCPS and the Presidents of the UFT and CSA to agree to the exemptions. In addition, higher class sizes at individual schools may be negotiated by the school’s UFT membership for elective and specialty classes. While the inclusion of exemptions in the Law is favorable, the exclusion of parents from the process of requesting and approving exemptions is unacceptable.

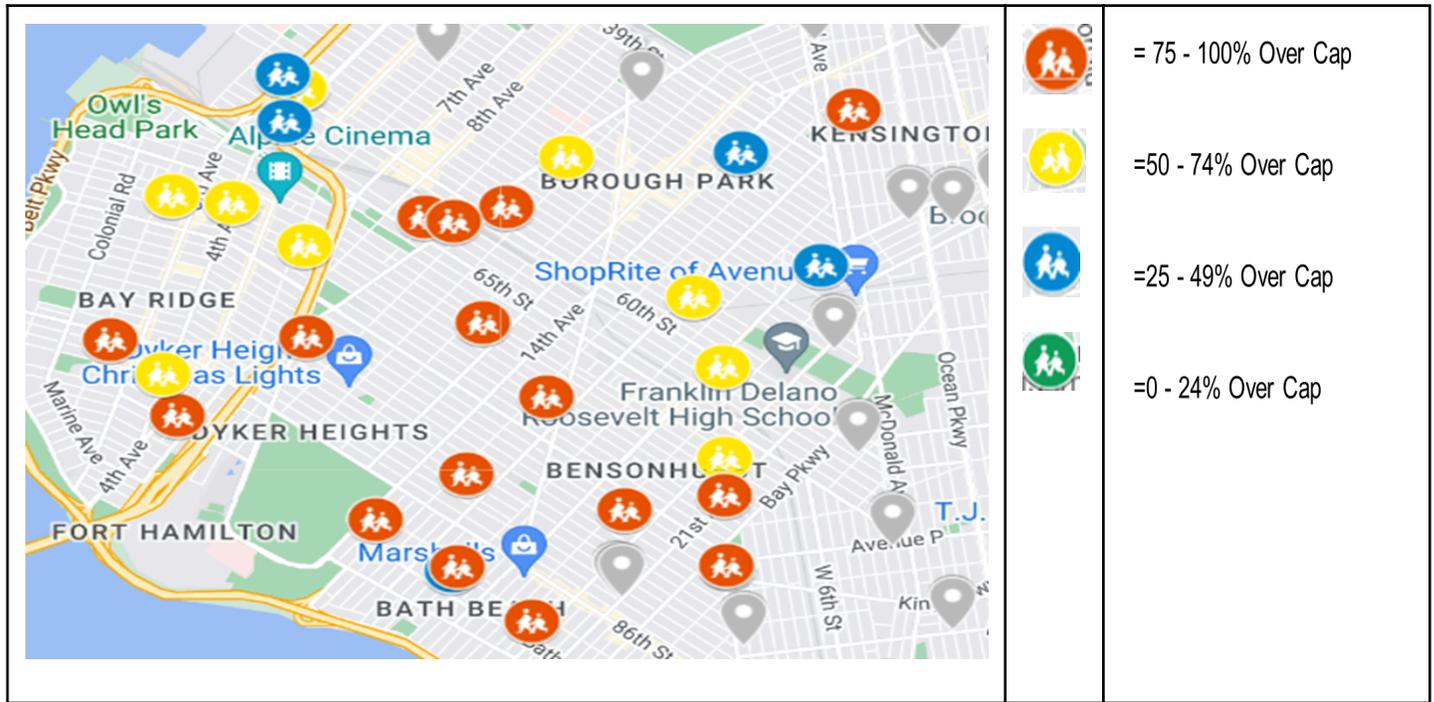
**THEREFORE**, the Community Education Council of District 20 calls on the New York State Senate and Assembly to amend the Law as follows:

- Apply the Law only to grades K-3 in line with the research on class size impact on learning outcome.
- Apply the Law only to schools in the lowest performing quartile academically and also in the highest quartile of economic need.
- Extend the period to implement the Law to 10 years from 5 years.
- Condition future expansion of the Law on learning outcomes from NYCPS.
- Prohibit school-based enrollment caps.
- Eliminate the suspension of C4E funding as a penalty for non-compliance with the Law.
- Remove the requirement that the UFT and CSA approve exemptions to the Law.

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<sup>22</sup> [NY State Senate Bill 2021-S9460 \(nysenate.gov\)](https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S9460)

Appendix 1 - District 20 Elementary Schools - Percentage of Classes over the Class Size Law caps



February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Tyice Tucker, and I am a parent of a child with special needs currently attending a District 75 school in the Bronx. I am submitting this testimony to urge the NY City Council's Education Committee and the Mayor to reconsider NYC's new class size law or make significant revisions to the law (as currently written) before implementing it in NYC public schools.

I would like to start by saying that policy-makers should ensure that any policy or law they decide to implement in our public schools, is beneficial to all of NYC's students/families and communities, and should not benefit some while hurting others. I am concerned that the new class size law could hurt schools in my community by diverting funding and resources away from the schools in my neighborhood that need the most support, and funneling them to schools that are already thriving. Additionally, I'm extremely concerned about the unintended consequences that this law may have on teacher quality at high-need schools in low-income neighborhood school districts like mine.

Because the city's highest poverty schools that are in most need of additional investments and resources already have smaller class sizes, the class size caps could potentially lead to new funding and resources being directed to NYC's better-off schools while severely limiting or even eliminating existing programs and support for the city's highest-poverty schools. NYC's low-need schools in wealthier districts have the most classes exceeding the new class size caps which will require a significant share of our school system's funds and resources to bring them in compliance with the new class reduction mandate caps. Meanwhile, schools in where I live in the Bronx, and struggling schools located in disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout NYC, already have small class sizes and would benefit the least from the class size law as it's currently written.

I'm also very concerned about NYC's rising teacher shortages and the possibility of schools that need great teachers the most, like my child's school, losing their best teachers to higher-performing school districts that will be incentivized to poach the best teachers from struggling schools in neighborhood districts located in low-income communities like mine.

My special needs child attends a D75 school with good teachers that care deeply for my daughter and that are committed to her success. There are times when my daughter comes home so excited, and when I ask if she had a good day, she smiles at me and starts to tell me all about her day. I was so elated that my daughter was enjoying her teacher and always looked so forward to going to school each day.

This new class size law could lead to more advantaged schools poaching teachers from high-need struggling public schools. If my daughter and students at high need schools throughout the Bronx were to lose the quality teachers at their schools, this would have disastrous consequences for students and families from my neighborhood.

I urge the Council and Mayor to think hard about the consequences this new mandate will have for children in neighborhood districts like mine, and make the necessary revisions to the law to ensure that it prioritizes and benefits the neediest schools in neighborhood districts that are in most need of additional resources and support.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tyice Tucker

February 29, 2024

The Honorable Rita C. Joseph  
Education Committee Chair  
New York City Council  
New York City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: 2/29/24 Committee on Education Hearing (re: Class Size Law Implementation)**

Dear Chairperson Rita C. Joseph and Members of the NY City Council's Committee on Education:

My name is Vanessa Simmons and I am a parent of a child, Davion, currently enrolled in a District 75 public school. Finding the right school where my child can thrive has been a struggle for me and for many NYC families with special needs children. Today, Davion attends a District 75 school with great teachers who are committed to his success. I see the growth in my child every day and he is learning so much. Davion is in a class of 15 students and enjoys his school days. Although Davion has quality teachers that are heavily involved in his education, more teachers like them are needed in schools across the Bronx, where my family resides.

I am submitting this testimony to convey my concerns about the new class size law, which could make this problem even worse. I am extremely concerned that the class size mandate will negatively impact teacher quality in schools like mine. This law could lead to advantaged schools poaching teachers from high-need, struggling public schools.

The new class size law must be reconsidered or revised to ensure that its implementation does not result in taking away the few qualified and effective teachers at schools in my neighborhood or any of the many high-need schools throughout the Bronx that desperately need more quality teachers. The current class size reduction mandate will divert the gems (quality teachers), that have stuck around at schools in high-need school districts located in low-income communities like mine, to other more affluent areas or school districts that are already high-performing where they are not needed.

We need to recruit and retain more quality teachers at both my child's school and high-need, struggling schools throughout the Bronx. Although smaller class sizes are always a good thing, teacher quality is more important than anything and great teachers are what make a classroom run smoothly, regardless of how many children are in the class.

I am asking the Council and the Mayor to listen to parents in low-income communities like mine, with large numbers of high-need, struggling schools that need the most help. Please thoroughly consider how this new law will affect school districts in need, such as those in the Bronx, before implementing the new class size caps. My child, and all children attending schools in high-need school districts throughout NYC, must be protected from losing their school's great teachers to schools in low-need, high-performing school districts.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Simmons

**Hello, my name is Venus Sze-Tsang, Staten Island elected parent pep member and class size working group member, one of the supporters of the Class Size minority report.**

I've spent a lot of my time in CEC meetings listening in on feedback about the class size law. I want to remind the public that supporting the class size minority report does not mean that we are anti teacher or anti student. We want lower class size too but not at the expense of more learning loss for our pandemic era students. There is natural cause such as the pandemic, such as flooding, housing migrants in schools that cause learning disruption. How do we knowingly cause learning disruption to our students? Many policy is written in a way that leaves things up for interpretation. I am not comfortable with the class size working group's recommendation of capping enrollment because that says out loud and clear that we will disrupt our families, starting from Kindergarten- we will have waitlists.

For example in district 20 and in district 31, we are getting new schools. We are all excited, we are all relieving the crowded schools right? This is how it should be, build then move the students not move the students to the next underenrolled school which could be no where in district 20 and district 31, every school is crowded.

A parent/teacher in district 22 voiced that she was worried that her child's ICT class will be affected. She was worried that once implemented, many ICT students would be declassified because there won't be enough special Ed teachers. Special Ed teachers are very hard to hire so her concern is valid. It's not right for community members to demoralize her for being concerned and not wanting smaller class size in place of her children's education needs not being met.

This needs to be done strategically as outlined in the Class Size working group minority report. We need to show that it's something worth the investment to do starting with the group of youngest students that will benefit the most, building a strong foundation.

If you don't know what Kindergarten waitlists look like, can you imagine getting a call at the end of kindergarten that you can return to your zone school in first grade. If we support capping enrollment, many many families will be shut out of their zoned schools and the long term effect can stretch out to low income and middle class working families losing the opportunity to take AP classes, dual language programs and electives that pave the way out of poverty for many. For me, I have three kids that I have to pay for college for- I was really looking forward to saving a year of college tuition from my children taking AP courses in High School. Implementing the law in a forceful manner, will interrupt learning for the same students who suffered the most during this pandemic. NYC students will really get as Senator John Liu calls it, a BASIC, in fact, a very BASIC

sound education.

Someone mentioned in CEC meeting chat, that their child is in a class of 32 seats, if classes get cut to 20 seats, where are the other 12 children going? We need more capacity and more teachers. We don't have the money, the capacity or the teachers. Please have DOE and Senator Liu show us where the funds are if Senator Liu insist that it exists. Even if we have the money to hire teachers, we need to first build capacity, it's not going to happen in 5 years because we can't even build a building in 5 years. The answer isn't simply fully funding the schools. We are going to lose funding per the law if we don't get it done within 5 years. Now, are you willing to lose funds for D75 students to support lowering class size for all? Are you willing to volunteer your child to attend an underenrolled school maybe a mile away? These are the tradeoffs we all have to think about.

Please review the Class Size Working group minority report and urge for there to be amendments made to the law, how to approach this law in a better way.

**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: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lupe Hernandez

Address: [redacted] N. Moore St [redacted] NY 10013

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Fernando Alvarez

Address: [redacted] 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave

I represent: Public School Teacher

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Leonie Harmsen

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Class Size Matters

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**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: Michael Rance

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Class Size Matters

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Renee Freeman

Address: Pain Professional Q309

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Sill, Assistant Secretary

Address: UFT 52 Broadway

I represent: UFT

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: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Fernando Alvarez

Address: 4th Grade Teachers

I represent: MO72 Chapter Leader

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Dr. Terrain Chambers Reeves

Address: Edward R Murrow High School

I represent: Teacher

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Samuel Daint

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYCPS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**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: Dan Weisberg

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYCPS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Rebecca Rawlings

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYCPS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Trevonda Kelly

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYCPS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**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: Emma Vadehra

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYCPS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Nina Kubota

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: SCA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Khalek Kirkland

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYCPS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**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: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Dale Kelly, First Vice President<sup>CSA</sup>

Address: 40 Rector St. NYC

I represent: CSA - Council of School Supv. & Admin.

Address: 40 Rector St. NYC

**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: John Liu

Address: 3850 Ball Blvd

I represent: NYS Senate

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: 2024-02-29

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Naveed Hasnain

Address: [Redacted] Central Park North

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**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: Ellen McHugh  
Address: [REDACTED] MARINE AVE [REDACTED] BKLN 11201

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: Sen. Robert Jackson  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 24

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Darwayne Arlene Rosada  
Address: dgaillard@gmail.com

I represent: Parent of student

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 45 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dalayne Marshall

Address: dread123@gmail.com

I represent: Parent of student

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 45 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shelena Pearson

Address: dread123@gmail.com

I represent: Parent of student

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 45 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Amyla Browning

Address: amyfabrown07@gmail.com

I represent: Parent of student

Address: dread123@gmail.com

Parent of student

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

**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: ANYTA BROWN

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ DUMONT AVE \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Student 1st NY

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. 45 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/29/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: April Blanding

Address: asblanding@gmail.com

I represent: Parent at Student

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**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: 2-29-24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shelley Pearson

Address: Brooklyn, NY.

I represent: Students First

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**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: STEPHEN STOWE

Address: [REDACTED] 76TH ST. BROOKLYN NY

I represent: CEC 20

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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