Testimony of

Chancellor James B. Milliken

The City University of New York

New York City Council Finance and Higher Education Committees

Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Executive Budget Hearing

May 05, 2017

Good morning, Finance Committee Chairperson Ferreras, Higher Education Committee Chairperson Barron, and committee members.

I am Vita Rabinowitz, Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost of the City University of New York. I am representing James B. Milliken, Chancellor of CUNY, who is not able to be with us today. I will be reading testimony that Chancellor Milliken prepared and hoped to deliver personally.

Thank you for this opportunity to meet with you today and thank you for your long history of support of CUNY and its talented, ambitious students. I am joined today by a number of colleagues who may help me in answering your questions. Seated at the table with me are Matthew Sapienza, the Senior Vice Chancellor

for Budget and Finance and Judy Bergtraum, our Vice Chancellor for Facilities, Planning and Construction.

We have conveyed to this Council on other occasions in the recent past the thinking behind our new vision for CUNY's future, our strategic framework, and we want to begin today by thanking you for the investments you make in our university. I would also like to take a few minutes to briefly discuss how we are rapidly implementing that vision and the great payoff that our students, and our city and state will be receiving.

True to the mission of CUNY – which turns 170 years old this month – our initiatives and especially your support are helping us expand access to the benefits of a college diploma, increase the quality and focus of the education we provide, build wider bridges directly into the most promising careers for our graduates, and improve affordability. Most of all, we are adding significantly to the single most important asset we provide – opportunity - to the most diverse and the most talented student body in the country.

One clear reason for our optimism is an increase in CUNY applications this spring. We will not have final enrollment numbers for some time but the jump in applications overall and large increases at some colleges demonstrate the importance of the educational opportunities CUNY offers. We credit both the city's investment in free application waivers and the state's new Excelsior Scholarship for some of this increase, and I hope all of you take as much satisfaction in that progress as we do.

You are of course all aware of one strong vote of confidence in higher education that we experienced this spring, with the enactment of Governor Cuomo's Excelsior free-tuition program. This program will create more access and opportunity for more students and will contribute to New York's prosperity well into the future. There is great interest in the program among potential students and their families and we are now implementing the program across the university.

Yet another reason for our optimism is the number of superb candidates who have expressed deep interest for leadership positions at CUNY. We are delighted that our board of trustees approved my

recommendation last week to appoint Karol Mason as the new president of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Ms. Mason, who held senior positions in President Obama's Justice Department and before that was a national leader at a major law firm, brings a wealth of experience and talent to this outstanding college, extraordinary stature, a proven commitment to equality and justice and, best of all, genuine affection and respect for the college's students and mission. She found an apartment near John Jay in two days, so I think I can say with confidence that this match was meant to be.

In terms of our strategic framework, we are making a significant advance in access by implementing this spring an important series of reforms in our remediation programs, and we are requesting your support for this very important initiative. About 80 percent of our incoming community college students currently test into remedial education. With careful evidence-based assessments of other college's programs and outcomes, we have undertaken a comprehensive approach to revising our remedial efforts, and as they are phased in, we expect major increases in the number of qualified students who will move into credit-bearing college courses. Of course, our academic

standards will not change at all, and the students will still have to satisfy the same credit-bearing course and degree requirements, guaranteeing unwavering quality, but it is clear that more students will move more swiftly toward degree completion, particularly students from underrepresented groups, who make up a very large portion of the students placed in remediation now.

In another important initiative that will expand access and accelerate degree progress for our students, we have moved forward on our plans for a significant expansion in our offerings of online degree programs. We have issued an RFP for a technology partner for our programs and have received very strong interest. The partner we choose will provide the expertise, technology platform and branding expertise so that interested CUNY faculty will be able to create online courses that will be of consistent quality and designed for success in this medium. We are confident that there will be great interest in our online offerings, particularly among adult students—a key constituency for CUNY as we expand our access efforts.

In addition, we have moved forward on our robust administrative excellence program. This is a comprehensive redesign of our administrative operations that will, as it is phased in, improve the services we provide to CUNY colleges, remove unnecessary administrative layers and frictions, and, not least, save tens of millions of dollars a year, freeing up funds that can be invested in the classroom and on our highest educational priorities.

The City's investment in our senior colleges is another area where your support would assist in implementing our new vision and expanding our access and program quality. Of course, continued support for the City Council Merit Scholarship program is an investment that changes lives and delivers substantial returns for our city. We are extremely grateful to the Council, particularly the Higher Education and Finance Committees, for their continued support of this critical scholarship initiative.

The City Council has been an outstanding partner to CUNY, and especially to our community colleges but also our comprehensive and senior colleges, by providing support for critical maintenance work and major new buildings. In recent years, your support has been instrumental in helping CUNY to complete North Hall's new quad at Bronx Community College, a major expansion of Medgar Evers's library, creation of a new dining facility at Queensborough Community College, and the creation of the Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema at Brooklyn College —all projects that added much-needed space and enriched those campuses with modern, well-designed facilities that inspire students.

Also with your support, we have been able to start design on the new Allied Health and Sciences Building for Hostos Community College. This major facility will provide modern classrooms and science labs for

the college's allied health programs, which provide essential workforce development. In addition, it will house a dental clinic that will provide students with practical experience and furnish the community with expanded services.

In recent years, the Council has provided over $250 million to CUNY and funded over a hundred projects, in particular at the community colleges where the need is greatest. Because of your generous support of critical maintenance funding, CUNY has been able to address some of the most challenging critical maintenance issues at these campuses. As you know from our previous discussions, achieving a state of good repair within the system is utmost priority for us.

All of this work is essential to realizing the vision in our strategic framework and expanding all the ways CUNY advances the cause of spreading the benefits of opportunity to all New Yorkers.

Other projects that support that vision include the excellent progress we are making on one of our largest single critical maintenance projects - construction of the new façade of LaGuardia Community College's Center 3 Building. This enormous building is 100 years old and its façade must be replaced if the building is to be preserved. I am happy to report that we expect to complete construction of this $125 million project by the beginning of next year and I believe you will all take pride in realization of what will be a community treasure.

Other critical maintenance projects that have benefited from Council funding are: the ongoing campus-wide utility upgrades at Bronx Community College; a complete replacement of the electrical system at

Queensborough Community college so that the college no longer has power outages; and the phased renovation of Hostos Community College's 500 Grand Concourse Building.

Let me conclude by pointing out that we are moving into a commencement season that will put on display just what these investments deliver. Our students, and our faculty, have won an extraordinary number of major distinctions this year, in fields ranging from poetry to biology. These distinctions are a tribute to the drive, creativity and talent of our students. Just as important, I want to stress that we take enormous pride in our many outstanding students who graduate and then go on, in large numbers, to teach our children in the city's schools, who keep us safe as law enforcement officials and maintain the health of our communities as the nurses and technicians who are the heart and soul of the most effective health care system in

the country. Those graduates are the backbone of our city, a backbone that only gets stronger with your investments.

Thank you for all you do for CUNY and NYC, and for this time to address you today.

Youth Employment Task Force Report

The City of New York
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Melissa Mark-Viverito
Speaker
New York City Council

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Glossary of Terms

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Administration: The Office of the Mayor of the City of New York and its supporting agencies.

Adopted Budget: The final budget approved by the New York City Council and administered by the City of New York.

Agency: A department serving the City of New York that reports to the Mayor.

Baseline: To permanently add funding to the New York City Budget to support a need for the foreseeable future, rather than for a single year.

Career and Technical Education (CTE): Refers to programs of study in New York City high schools that prepare students for postsecondary education, advanced training or employment in industry sectors including skilled trades, applied sciences and technology.

City of New York ("City"): Refers to public entities, agencies or services in New York City.

Community-Based Organization (CBO): A nonprofit group that works at a local level to improve the lives of City residents, often through contracts with the City.

Fiscal Year ("FY"): The government budget year for the City of New York. A fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends June 30 of the year for which it has been titled. For example, Fiscal 2017 began July 1, 2016 and will end June 30, 2017.

Ladders for Leaders: A track within the Summer Youth Employment Program that allows students to compete for an employer- or third-party paid internship based on academic achievement, prior work experiences and other relevant qualifications.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): A formal agreement between two or more parties to establish a partnership.

New York City Council ("City Council," "Council"): A municipal legislative body of 51 representatives of New York City's 8.4 million residents.

Older Youth: A young person or group of young people between the ages of 16 and 22.

Opportunity Youth: A young person or group of young people who is not enrolled in school and neither employed nor actively seeking employment. This population and its individual members are also referred to as out-of-school, out-of-work (OSOW) youth or Disconnected Youth.

Participant: A New York City teenager or young adult who enrolls in the Summer Youth Employment Program or Work, Learn, Grow.

Program Provider ("Provider"): A community-based organization that has been contracted by the Department of Youth and Community Development to operate the Summer Youth Employment Program or Work, Learn, Grow. Services include selecting program participants via lottery, identifying and matching selected participants with employers, offering orientations and workforce development training, and collecting paperwork from and monitoring employers.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP): A publicly funded youth employment program offered to New York City youth ages 14-24 between the months of July and August. SYEP allows participants to gain introductory work experience in part-time jobs for up to six weeks.

Track: A sub-program within either the Summer Youth Employment Program or Work, Learn, Grow that serves a specific population.

Transferable Skills: Often referred to as "soft skills," these include, but are not limited to, interpersonal skills, communication, motivation, critical thinking, problem solving, self-confidence, leadership, and self-awareness. Transferable skills can be acquired and applied to all types of employment settings.

Vulnerable Youth: A person or group of people between the ages of 14-24 who is involved in the justice, foster or homeless shelter system, or who has run away from home.

Worksite: The location where a Summer Youth Employment Program or Work, Learn, Grow employer operates, and where a participant works.

Work, Learn, Grow (WLG): A City Council funded youth employment program offered to New York City students ages 14-24 between the months of October and April. WLG allows recent Summer Youth Employment Program participants to gain more extensive introductory work experience in part-time jobs for up to 25 weeks.

Younger Youth: A teenager or group of teenagers between the ages of 14 and 15.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

A young person's first paid job can be a crucial developmental experience, ideally providing a safe and supported entry into the world of work as well as significant insight into one's strengths, weaknesses, interests and ambitions. Since 1963, New York City's (NYC) Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) has connected generations of New Yorkers to that first job. Particularly for young people from low-income families residing in communities with few work opportunities, who might otherwise struggle to find summer jobs, SYEP plays a vital role in ensuring that youth can experience the workplace, earn a paycheck and advance toward adulthood.

Operated by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the program has grown and adapted in numerous ways to meet the ever-changing needs of young people, employers and the overall job market in NYC.

Over the past several years, under the leadership of Mayor Bill de Blasio and the NYC City Council, enrollment in the program has nearly doubled to 60,000 participants annually, allowing it to positively affect the lives of many more local youth. This growth has coincided with the Council's creation of Work, Learn, Grow (WLG), established in 2015 to provide 6,000 youth with year-round career-readiness training and paid employment opportunities.

As part of the City's continued investment in these programs, Mayor de Blasio and City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito commissioned the Youth Employment Task Force to assess the key areas for growth and improvement in SYEP and WLG. Through research, analysis and conversations with dozens of stakeholders, the Task Force has developed a set of proposals that provide a clear direction for the future of these programs.

- First and foremost, the Task Force established that the purpose of the programs should be to provide young people with experiences that prepare them for the workforce. The Task Force also developed a set of desired outcomes for program participants, which center on a clearly defined set of transferable skills which position them to succeed in employment and throughout their careers. DYCD and other stakeholders should evaluate programs and providers against this standard, and the Administration should manage the full workforce system to ensure that programs and resources across agencies are aligned with this vision.
- Second, the Task Force recognized that youth at different ages and stages of development need different services and supports from a youth employment program. It concluded that SYEP and WLG will be more effective if DYCD makes modifications to the target populations, putting the focus on youth ages 14-21. Other City workforce development programs should serve young adults ages 22-24. The Task Force also recognized that SYEP and WLG may be particularly beneficial for youth who would otherwise chronically struggle to access the labor market. The Task Force recommends:
    - SYEP, which currently serves ages 14-24, should focus on ages 14-21 for the general population, while continuing to serve youth categorized as Vulnerable Youth ages 14-24.
    - WLG, which currently serves ages 14-24, should focus on older teens and young adults, ages 16-21, and should expand to include youth who are out of school, as well as those in school.
- Third, the Task Force concluded that SYEP and WLG should be considered as foundational components of a broader series of in-school and out-of-school opportunities for learning, work experience and career exploration, rather than as isolated, one-time programs. With that in mind, the Task Force recommends creating a more explicit connection between employment programs and schools, as well as developing intentional pathways that offer multi-year, progressive experiences for youth.
- Finally, the Task Force focused on ensuring that the City has the right operations and systems in place to support improved program quality. These recommendations include strengthening provider capacity, employer engagement, interagency coordination and evaluation.

Summary of Key Recommendations

Program focus

The purpose of SYEP and WLG is to provide youth with a set of work-related experiences that can better prepare them to succeed in employment.

SYEP and WLG should help participants to:

- Develop social skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills, decision making skills, problem solving skills, self-management skills, self-confidence and self-awareness;
- Learn work norms and culture;
- Understand career pathways and decision points;
- Build a social network;
- Create a positive identity as a productive employee;
- Learn to manage money and
- Articulate the skills they have developed.

SYEP should offer programming for:

- Younger Youth (ages 14-15)
- Older Teens (ages 16-18)
- Young Adults (ages 19-21)
- Vulnerable Youth (ages 14-24)

WLG should offer programming for:

- Older Teens (ages 16-18)
- Young Adults (ages 19-21, including out-of-school and out-of work youth)

Programmatic improvements for SYEP and WLG program models

Program Quality

- Develop a new track for younger youth focused on career exploration and service-based learning.
- Establish a formal connection between SYEP and WLG providers, schools and educators. Create more explicit linkages between all NYC youth employment programs across multiple agencies.
- Boost investment in support services for Vulnerable Youth (VY), and recruit and deliver technical assistance for additional VY providers.

Program Operations

To enable more robust participant assessment and stronger placements, the Task Force recommends an accelerated timeline for the following Program Operations elements:

- Budget development
- Worksite development
- Ladders for Leaders application
- SYEP application release
- Lottery and matching

Additionally, the preparation and orientation for SYEP and WLG should be reevaluated and improved to better meet the needs of program participants.

System-building efforts to implement the proposed changes and sustain a successful system:

Provider Capacity

- Ensure providers have the capacity/skills to impart the proposed career exploration programming.
- Partner providers with job development groups to help enhance efforts where needed.
- Secure additional providers to support any future growth.

Employer Engagement

- Create a single, shared job development effort across the City's youth workforce programs.
- Revise and target messaging to potential employers.
- Leverage Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), the non-profit community, industry networks and Chambers of Commerce to increase the supply of jobs.
- Enhance supervisor worksite training to align with the goals of the City's focus on career pathways

Interagency Coordination

- Establish a standing Department of Education (DOE)-DYCD Working Group that is guided by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will codify the requirements and responsibilities expected of each party, as well as outline an agreement around data-sharing between the two agencies. This MOU will provide a framework for ongoing collaboration as the agencies improve their coordination around youth workforce development.
- Formalize the Vulnerable Youth Working Group between DYCD, the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), Department of Probation (DOP), Human Resources Administration (HRA), the Center for Youth Employment (CYE) and the Department of Homeless Services (DHS).
- Leverage City agencies to become larger employers for SYEP, and consider ways to make SYEP and WLG valuable as inputs to replenishing talent pipelines in City government.

Evaluation

- Data collection and program evaluation should be grounded in each program's stated purpose and targeted outcome(s).
- Codify the transferable skills in a way that they are commonly understood across agencies and providers.
- Share data and information with all relevant stakeholders, and the public, on a regular basis.

Background

Background

Purpose of the Task Force

In June 2016 Mayor Bill de Blasio and Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito formed the Youth Employment Task Force to make recommendations about the future of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and Work, Learn, Grow (WLG), with implications for the full portfolio of New York City's youth employment initiatives. The Task Force is part of the City's commitment to expanding employment opportunities for NYC youth. In the summer of 2016, DYCD served over 60,000 young people in SYEP, up from approximately 35,000 just three years earlier. The program is now slated to grow to 65,000 slots for the summer of 2017.

The Task Force, chaired by Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery and City Council Finance Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, began work in September 2016. It assessed the key areas for growth and improvement in youth workforce programming to inform future investments in SYEP and WLG. Members included Administration officials and City Council members, as well as stakeholders from philanthropy, business, academia, advocacy and youth development. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A.
The specific goals of the Task Force were to:

1. Define the mission of New York City youth employment programs – namely SYEP and WLG – and their proper role in preparing city youth to be successful in school and their careers.

2. Develop recommendations to improve both the SYEP and WLG program models.

3. Identify system-building efforts necessary to implement the proposed changes and sustain a successful system.

About SYEP and WLG

Launched in 1963, SYEP provides youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with up to six weeks of paid entry-level experience in July and August at worksites across the City. SYEP, which served 60,113 young people in 2016, is the largest program of its kind in the country.[1] Through 51 community-based organizations (CBOs) contracted by DYCD, SYEP offers workshops on job readiness, career exploration and financial literacy that support participants in their summer work experience. Program participants are paid minimum wage and work up to 25 hours per week in entry-level jobs with a variety of employers, including:

- Government agencies
- Hospitals
- Summer camps
- Non-profits
- Small businesses
- Law firms
- Museums
- Sports enterprises
- Retail organizations

To secure a job in SYEP, applicants may apply online or to a service provider operating the program. Selection for most of the program is conducted through a lottery system administered by DYCD. All selection is random. The service providers cannot influence who is chosen. A majority of applicants are offered slots in the program, and those who choose to enroll are scheduled for orientation.

Providers assess, prepare and place participants; secure employer commitments to serve as host sites; and follow up with both youth and employers throughout the six weeks of the program. Work experiences must be appropriate for the participant's age, skills, needs and interests. DYCD reviews and approves each potential work site.

Each participant must complete four to eight hours of mandatory unpaid orientation to be eligible for a work placement. Orientation takes place after enrollment during the months of April through July. Providers determine topics to be included, such as work readiness and financial literacy as well as career exploration, health education and preparing for higher education.

The work placement and the number of hours worked are determined through an individual assessment of the participant by the provider. Once the program begins, providers are encouraged to meet with youth at least weekly to provide mentoring, counseling and educational support. Support services are provided onsite or through referrals made to other organizations for mental health, substance abuse treatment, housing and other social services.

Over the past 10 years, DYCD has established specialized SYEP program tracks for younger youth, vulnerable youth and high-achieving youth seeking more formal internship experiences.

- The Younger Youth track (ages 14-15) includes an orientation for first-time workers, work experiences that may include service learning and community service projects, and educational services, including time spent reflecting on the experience.

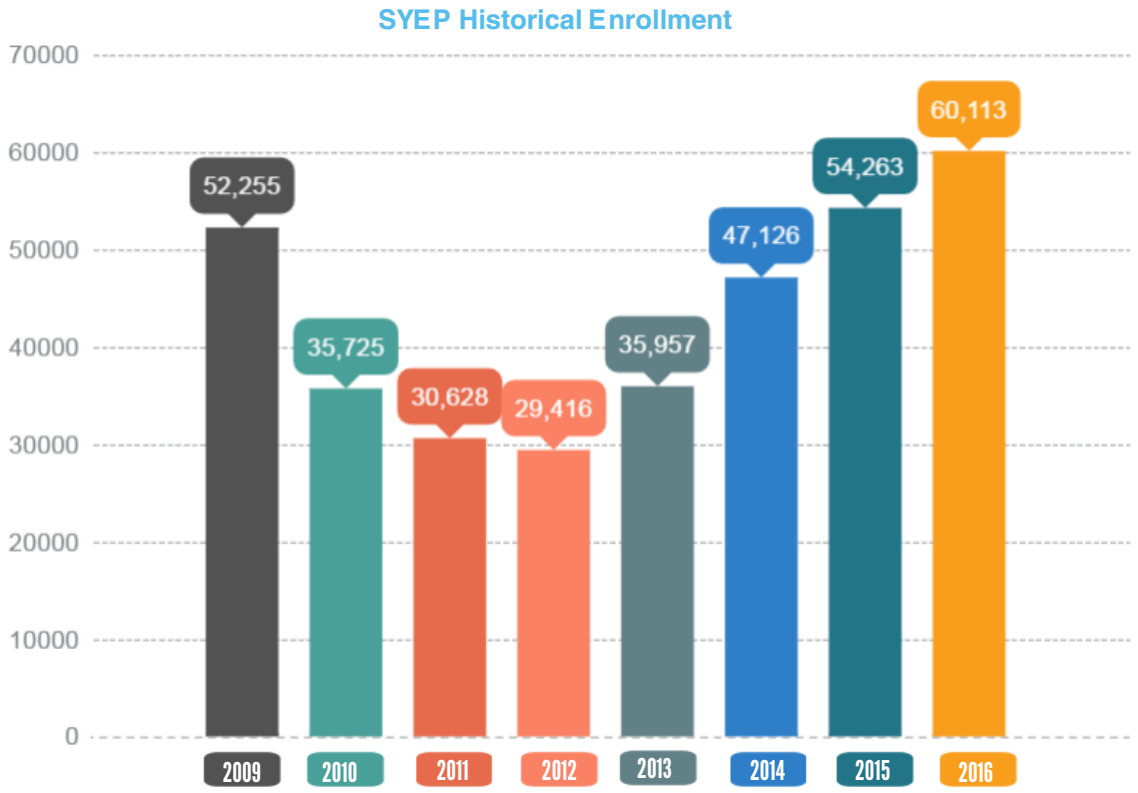
[1] See Appendix B for brief descriptions of summer jobs programs in other municipalities.

- The Vulnerable Youth track provides specialized employment services for four categories of youth: justice-involved, foster care, runaway/homeless and youth receiving preventive services. Participants are referred by support agencies such as ACS, DHS and DOP, or recruited directly by the provider through their networks of referral and support agencies. This specialized track more than tripled in just three years, from 1,000 participants in 2014 to 3,050 in 2016. The Vulnerable Youth track is currently planned to expand to 5,000 by 2020.

- Ladders for Leaders is a competitive employer-paid internship program for high-achieving high school and college students who have previous work experience. This track offers students an opportunity to participate in internships with leading corporations, non-profits and government agencies. In 2016, enrollment grew to 1,538, up 267% from just three years earlier. Entry is competitive and is based on an application, essay and resume. Final hiring decisions are made by employer partners.

WLG, a Council-funded initiative, provides participants with career-readiness training and paid employment opportunities for up to 25 weeks from October through April. Participants must be between the ages of 14 and 24 and currently in school. Selection is by lottery and is limited to SYEP participants from the preceding summer. WLG was launched during the 2015-2016 school year and currently enrolls 6,000 participants.

SYEP and WLG are part of a larger citywide strategy to more effectively prepare youth and young adults for success in the world of work. In May 2015, Mayor de Blasio, First Lady Chirlane McCray, and the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City launched the NYC Center for Youth Employment (CYE), a public-private initiative with the goal of supporting 100,000 unique work-related experiences each year, including high-quality summer jobs, career exposure, skills-building and supportive mentorships, by 2020.



Source: NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

Task Force Process

The Mayor's Office and City Council engaged the Youth Development Institute to assist in the planning, organization and implementation of the Task Force.

The Youth Employment Task Force carried out its work from September to December 2016. It convened four times and held eight working group meetings, attended by staff representatives of the Task Force members. These additional meetings provided more time for discussion, data collection, presentations and deliberation.

The Task Force collected information from focus groups with over 70 key stakeholders, including youth participants, SYEP and WLG contracted providers, employers and educators. Focus group participants raised key issues, ideas and criticisms that were then discussed by the Task Force. Summaries of findings from these focus groups are provided on the following pages.

Mayor's Office staff also held briefings and discussions with City agencies involved in SYEP and WLG as well as other youth employment programs, including DOE, HRA, ACS, DOP, DHS, the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), Small Business Services (SBS), the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) and the City University of New York (CUNY).

The Task Force was jointly managed by staff from the Office of the Mayor and City Council Finance Division.

Key Findings

Key Findings

The Task Force's findings on youth employment are grounded in the available evidence-based research, data supplied by DYCD and information from stakeholder Focus Groups.

1. Research shows that youth employment programs have a positive impact on participants, but also indicates a need for further program refinement and a greater focus on target populations.

Reviews of national and local research, coupled with feedback from program participants and other stakeholders provided the Task Force with a clear sense of the value of the program and its positive impact on participants' lives.

National research shows that youth employment programs like SYEP are particularly beneficial for participants with limited career networks and employment opportunities. These programs provide an essential gateway for low-income young people who chronically struggle to access the labor market.[2]

Several studies have shown how SYEP has positive impacts in a variety of areas. A New York University study found that students who participated in SYEP had a better attendance rate and were more engaged academically during the following school year.[3] An analysis conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School found that SYEP participation not only boosted near-term earnings, but also decreased rates of imprisonment and potentially saved lives.[4] A National Bureau of Economic Research report, additionally, found that SYEP can improve educational outcomes and social/emotional development and decrease negative behaviors.[5]

Although early exposure to work has shown to help boost future earnings, research has not found that SYEP improves participants' subsequent employability.[6] This gap suggests a need for ongoing evaluation and program refinement, particularly given the Task Force's recommendation to prioritize career preparedness.

2. SYEP and WLG predominantly serve minority and low-income youth.

Given the evidence indicating that SYEP can be particularly beneficial for participants with little or no experience or connections to the labor market, the Task Force focused its initial inquiries on the demographics of the youth participants. DYCD data confirmed that the program largely serves the categories of young people that can benefit most from this type of experience. These data are shown on the following pages.

- *SYEP and WLG serve a high proportion of minority youth.*

  In 2016, 40% of SYEP participants were Black, 26% were Hispanic, 20% were White, 9% were Asian and 5% identified as Other.

  In 2016, 50% of WLG participants were Black, 31% were Hispanic, 6% were White, 7% were Asian and 6% identified as Other.

[2] Ross, Martha, and Richard Kazis. Youth Summer Jobs Programs: Aligning Ends and Means. Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, July 2016.

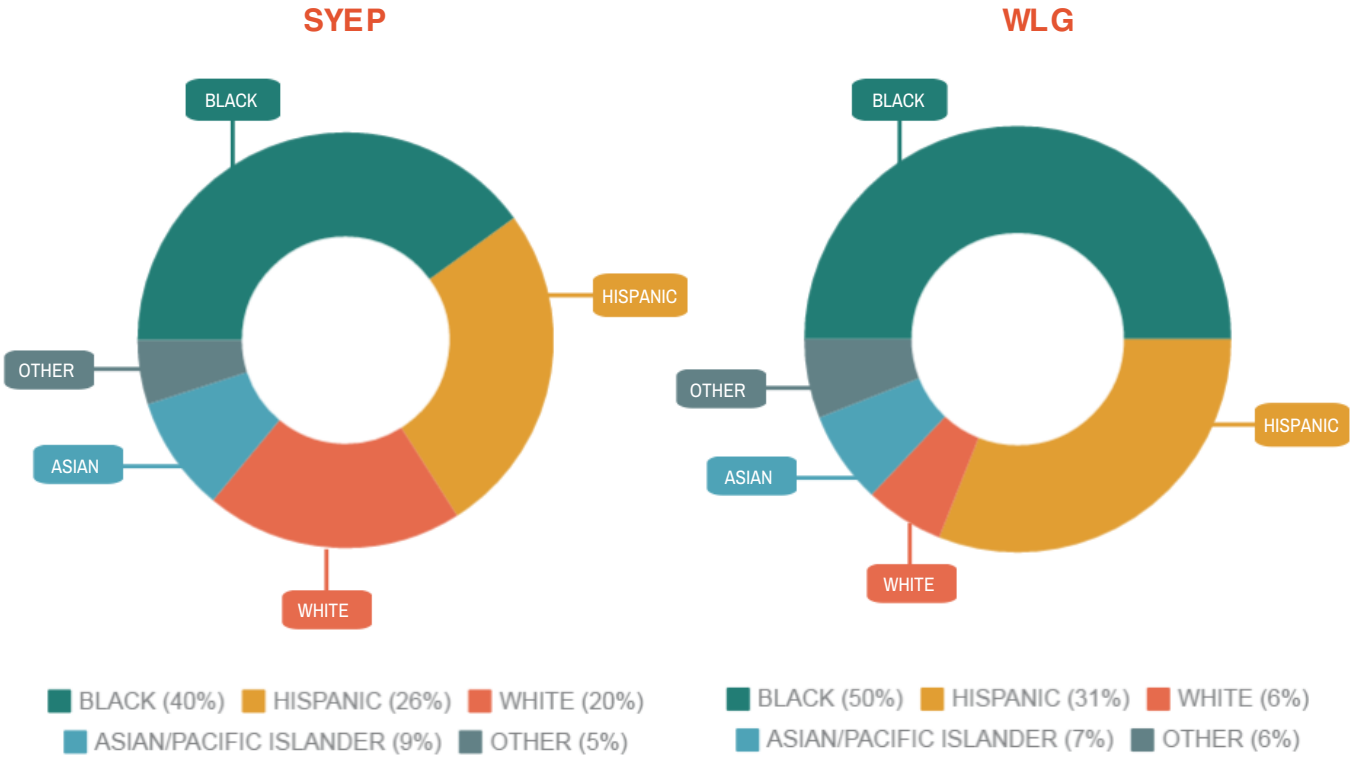
[3] Leos-Urbel, Jacob, Amy Ellen Schwartz, Meryle Weinstein, and Beth Weitzman. More than a Paycheck? The Impact of Summer Youth Employment on Students' Educational Engagement and Success. Issue brief no. 02-12. Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, New York University. Institute for Education and Social Policy.

[4] Gelber, Alexander, Adam Isen, and Judd Kessler. The Effects of Youth Employment: Evidence from New York City Summer Youth Employment Program Lotteries. Working paper no. 20810. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2014.

[5] Schwartz, Amy Ellen, Jacob Leos-Urbel, and Matt Wiswall. Making Summer Matter: The Impact of Youth Employment on Academic Performance. Working paper no. 21470. NBER, 2015.

[6] Sum, Andrew, Ishwar Khatiwada, Mykhaylo Trubskyy, Martha Ross, Walter McHugh, and Sheila Palma. The Plummeting Labor Market Fortunes of Teens and Young Adults. Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, March 2014.

Enrollment Breakdown by Ethnicity

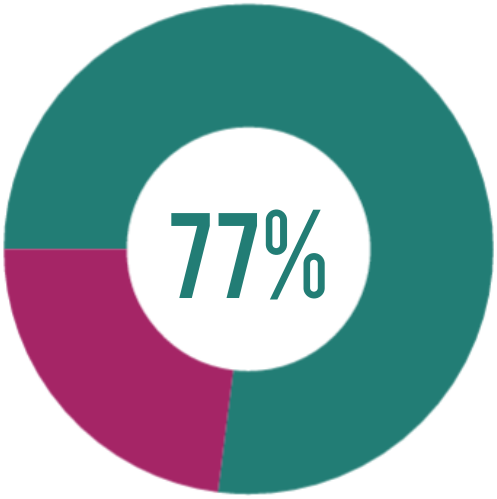


Source: NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

- *Young people from low-income families participate in the program at high rates.*

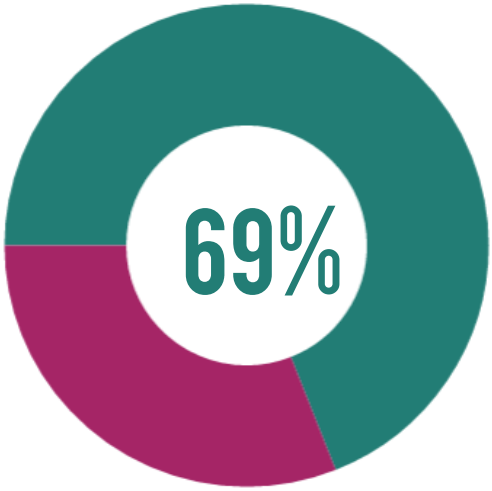
  In 2016, 77% of SYEP participants were from families eligible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, designed to help families achieve self-sufficiency. Sixty-nine percent of participants were from families eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

SYEP Serves Youth From Low-income Families



of participants are from families eligible for TANF*

*200% of Federal Poverty Level



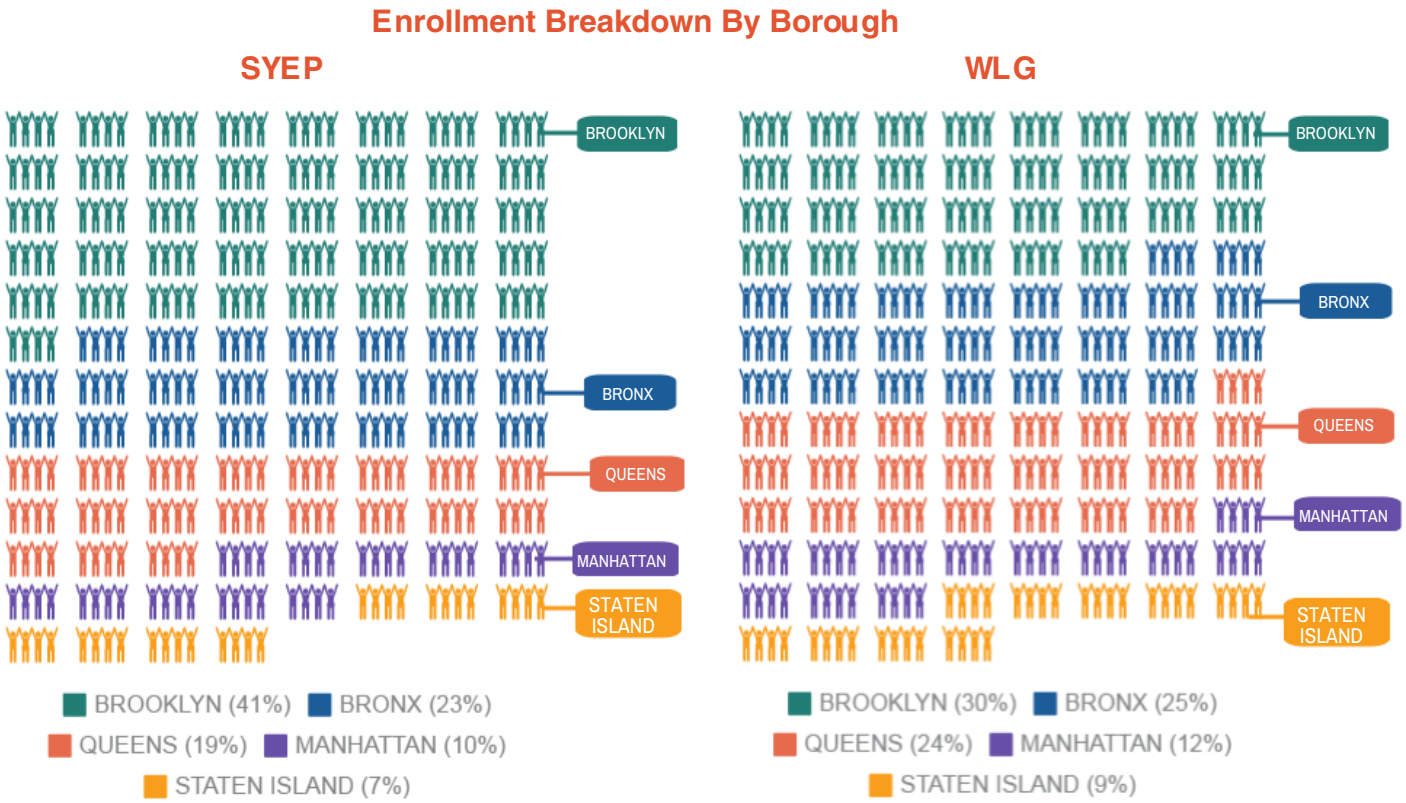
of participants are from families eligible for SNAP*

*150% of Federal Poverty Level

Source: NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

- *Residents of Brooklyn and the Bronx make up the majority of SYEP participants.*

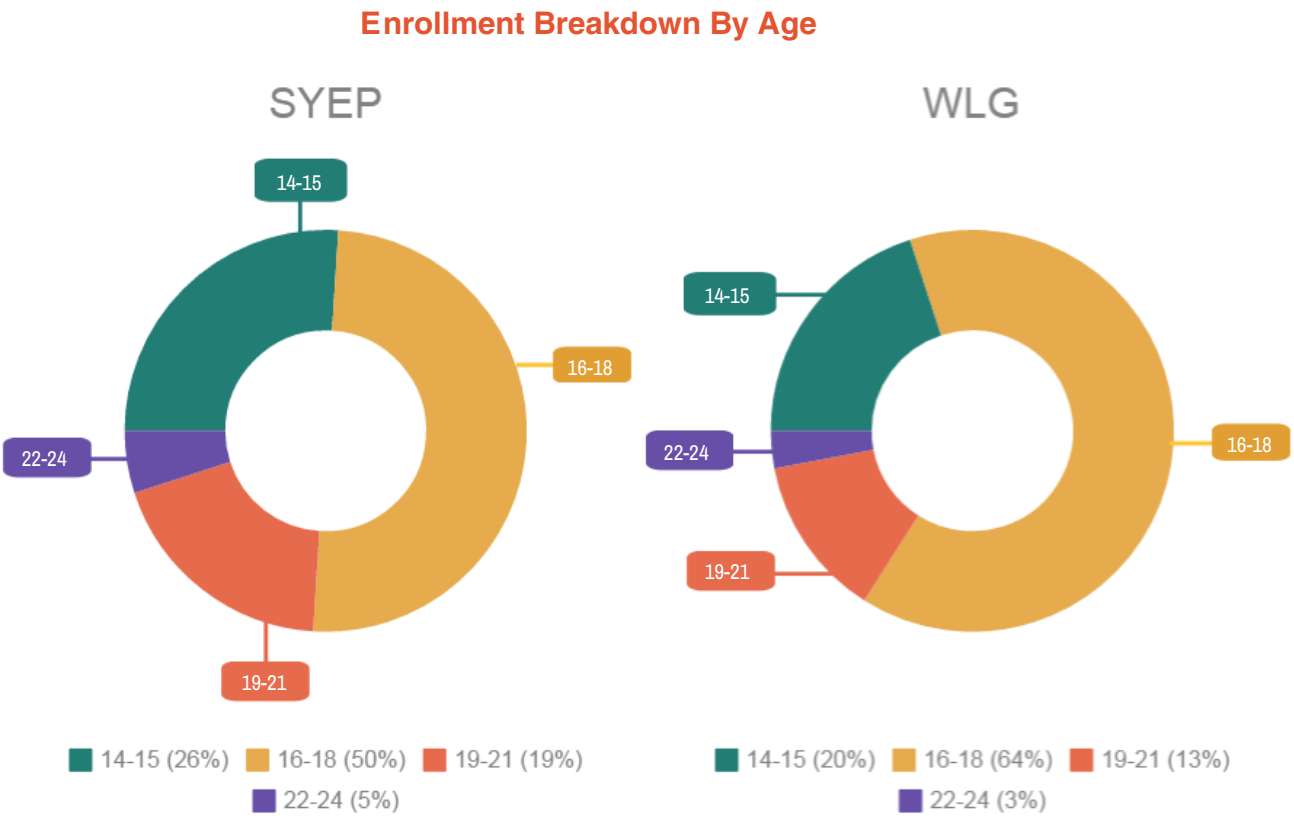
  In 2016, 41% of SYEP/WLG participants lived in Brooklyn, followed by 23% from the Bronx. Nineteen percent of participants were from Queens. The neighborhoods with the highest number of SYEP/WLG participants included Borough Park, East New York, Canarsie, High Bridge and Bushwick.



Source: NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

- *The vast majority of SYEP Participants are between the ages of 14 and 19.*

  In 2016, 76% of SYEP, and 84% of WLG participants, were between the ages of 14 and 18. Twenty-four percent of SYEP participants, and 16% of WLG participants, were over 19.



Source: NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

Summaries of Focus Groups

Summaries of Focus Groups

Providers

SYEP/WLG providers expressed the view that these youth workforce programs primarily serve to furnish participants a sense of accomplishment, confidence, and responsibility through their employment experiences. They further indicated that the most important benefits SYEP/WLG offer young people are opportunities to learn about potential career paths, develop and apply essential skills, build a professional network and learn self-sufficiency.

Providers also agreed that the programs benefit all different types of participating youth, but highlighted the particular benefit vulnerable youth derive from SYEP/WLG through dedicated support and employment opportunities. Providers asserted that program quality is dependent upon operational quality: if operational questions were resolved and the overall timeline accelerated, providers would have more capacity to deepen the quality of the experience for participants.

Providers confirmed that SYEP/WLG participants at least 21 years old and above have markedly different needs from younger and high school youth and, therefore, should ideally be served by a separate program focused on the development for that age group. Relatedly, providers were unanimous in their declaration that it is a challenge to develop jobs for 14 and 15-year-olds due to lack of interest from employers, suggesting that alternative program models that offer enrichment might make more sense.

Provider representatives were not in uniform agreement around issues focused on program access and opportunity. More specifically, some providers believe that SYEP should continue to prioritize equity of opportunity for youth throughout the lottery system. Others indicated that the programs should offer a "tiered" experience that allows participants to build on their skill development, potentially with the same employer, from year to year.

Youth Participants

Youth participants confirmed that SYEP/WLG provided them with an introduction to the real world and helped them learn necessary hard skills, including time management, financial management and employer dress code, among others. Additionally, participants used their work experience to apply themselves in school by tailoring their classes to their career interests and, in some cases, use their education to begin a more purposeful career exploration. The participants expressed a wide range of reasons for applying to SYEP: some youth apply for the money they ultimately earn, others are encouraged by their school, and some want experience in the job market and learn about different employment sectors.

Some youth participants suggested that the current structure and implementation of the SYEP lottery has room for improvement. A number of participants stated that the lottery does not award slots to those who most want or need jobs. Additionally, youth recommended that the program provide tiered, progressive job experiences. Some youth were frustrated by the orientation and site selection process, both of which can seem impersonal and generic. The involvement of participants' schools seems to help mitigate these challenges.

Focus group participants had work experiences of varying quality. Some participants recalled highly valuable SYEP/WLG experiences, while others characterized their experiences as uninspiring or boring. On balance, most youth felt supported at work and by their provider and DYCD.

Employers

Overall, this group expressed satisfaction with their involvement in the program, but they are eager to work together and find administrative efficiencies and opportunities to improve SYEP/WLG for the participants.

Representatives of SYEP/WLG employers offered a number of operational recommendations to help address some of the general issues that employers feel are important for program enhancements.

Employers feel that the program's administrative processes need improvement. The paper timesheet collection process can be slow and disorganized. To correct this issue, this group suggested that digital timesheets could be made available for participants and employers. This change would eliminate the need for a third party to intervene, and increase efficiency across the board.

Many employers would also like more input in the participant matching process to craft job descriptions based off of the participants' existing skill-level and interests. Finally, they'd like to extend this input and see greater alignment between SYEP and WLG programs, including a way for employers to select youth for participation in WLG who have already performed well at their site and are interested in continuing their job.

Educators

Educators confirmed that some select schools – those with the available capacity and through the dedicated efforts of teachers and administrators – effectively and comprehensively support their students in career readiness, including SYEP/WLG. These institutions employ a top-down "all hands on deck" approach where faculty members are expected to implement consistent messaging and support around work-based learning goals and expectations. Some schools have close relationships with SYEP and WLG providers that have proven critical to creating better collaboration and supports for students. These relationships can be leveraged to help shape a better experience before and during the school year.

While supporting student participation in SYEP/WLG, educators are faced with a number of challenges. The first issue is related to capacity: most schools have a limited number of guidance counselors to support students. For example, one guidance counselor present supported hundreds of students participating in SYEP. Additionally, school administrators do not generally have formal relationships with SYEP/WLG providers and school-based career readiness efforts are not currently linked to SYEP. All of these issues present challenges for educators trying to support students before and after they participate in SYEP/WLG.

To improve the relationship between schools and providers, some educators recommended that DYCD and DOE jointly support a DYCD point person for all city schools. They also recommended in-school SYEP trainings and for guidance counselors to have more involvement in SYEP/WLG participant orientation. Schools should also have a stronger role in job training.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations reached by the Task Force are grounded in findings from a review of DYCD data, qualitative information gleaned from the four focus groups, and the members' expertise, research and individual experiences in the field of youth workforce development.

The Task Force's set of recommendations are organized into two categories:

1. Program Focus and Program Quality
2. Operations and System-Building

Program Focus and Program Quality

The initial focus of the Task Force was to articulate both the purpose of SYEP and WLG and desired outcomes for program participants. From there, the group evaluated research and feedback to develop a clear sense of the populations that can benefit most from these programs.

After identifying the purpose of these programs and their target populations, the Task Force developed a set of recommendations to improve program quality. The program quality recommendations are aimed at improving the value, impact and reach of the SYEP and WLG programs. In several cases, the recommendation could take the form of a pilot program during the summer of 2017 to assess the impact of the concept and consider it for adoption in the upcoming SYEP RFP. The RFP is tentatively scheduled to be released in fall of 2017, with new contracts to begin in summer 2018.

Operations and System-Building

The second set of recommendations is focused on ensuring that the City has the right operations, systems and structures in place to support the program quality recommendations and any future growth in the programs. Over the past several years, DYCD has expanded the size of SYEP by nearly 100% and administered the implementation of the Council's year-round employment initiative, WLG. To support a growing system, and to successfully implement the program recommendations, many elements of the current system will need to be strengthened, adjusted or redesigned.

The Task Force's initial focus area was the SYEP timeline, which should be adjusted to provide a better experience for participants, providers and employers. Similarly, the preparation and orientation process for participants should be enhanced to ensure that young people are better informed and prepared for their experience. Finally, the Task Force prioritized four key system-building areas of the SYEP and WLG programs – provider capacity, interagency coordination, employer engagement, and evaluation – and provided suggestions for potential changes and improvements in each of them.

Recommendations on Program Focus and Program Quality

1. The primary purpose of SYEP and WLG should be to provide youth with a set of work-related experiences that can better prepare them to succeed in employment.

Youth employment programs can serve a variety of purposes – exposing participants to the world of work, providing them and their families with supplemental income and simply keeping them occupied and safe during the summer. While recognizing these various benefits, the Task Force agreed that the primary purpose of SYEP and WLG should be to provide youth with a set of work-related experiences that can better prepare them to succeed in employment.

SYEP and WLG should be structured to provide an entry-point to the job market and help young people learn a variety of skills necessary to succeed there. Participants should learn about work norms and culture, and begin to understand career pathways. Moreover, they should begin to build their social and professional networks, which is especially critical for low-income youth that lack these career gateways. Participants should also develop their ability to articulate the specific skills they gained during the job experience.

Recommended Next Steps:

Going forward, DYCD should align all program development, procurement and evaluation efforts with this stated goal.

2. The key outcome of SYEP and WLG should be the development of transferable skills.

While analyzing the various benefits of SYEP and WLG, the Task Force repeatedly returned to the idea of transferable skills (also known as "soft skills"). Employers engaged through the Task Force and in other research have repeatedly expressed that they need employees with these skills. Transferable skills are often of equal value to academic and technical skills, especially in the early stages of labor market participation. Employment programs like SYEP and WLG allow youth to learn about and practice these skills in an authentic, but "low risk" environment.

Going forward, the City should clearly define and codify these skills across City agencies, providers and employers so all stakeholders can work toward the same objectives.

SYEP and WLG should help participants:

- Develop social skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills, decision making skills, problem solving skills, self-management skills, self-confidence and self-awareness;
- Learn work norms and culture;
- Understand career pathways and decision points;
- Build a social network;
- Create a positive identity as a productive employee;

- Learn to manage money; and
- Articulate the skills they have developed.

Recommended Next Steps:

The City, in close coordination with providers and employers and by engaging with experts in the field of youth workforce development, should formalize this set of skills and competencies and codify them as part of the new RFP process.

3. SYEP and WLG experiences should be more narrowly focused and differentiated to meet the needs of youth at different stages of development.

SYEP and WLG should not be "one-size fits all" program models. Both in terms of developmental needs and work-readiness, the average 14 year-old is notably different from that of an 18 or 19 year-old. DYCD already recognizes this distinction and separates SYEP participants into "younger youth" and "older youth" tracks, with different programming for each.

The Task Force believes that SYEP should offer a set of developmentally appropriate, sequenced summer experiences that help impart the transferable skills referenced above. Specifically:

- Younger SYEP participants (ages 14-15) should focus on career exploration and work readiness to prepare them for a first job.
- Older teens (ages 16-19) should receive a program experience primarily focused on jobsite work.
- Young adults (ages 20-21) should have opportunities to move toward a career path.

Program participants age 22 and older (estimated at 3,200 annually) have markedly different needs from high school and college aged youth, needs which are not necessarily best served by SYEP. Therefore, participation in SYEP should be limited to youth ages 14-21. However, the Vulnerable Youth track should continue to serve youth ages 22-24, given this population's unique needs.

More generally, young adults age 22 and above should be supported by other City-funded workforce development and employment training programs, including those tailored to out-of-school and out-of-work young adults. These programs include but are not limited to the Young Adult Internship Program, District 79 Alternative Schools and Programs, Out-of-School Youth Program, Workforce 1, the Department of Education's Office of Adult and Continuing Education classes.

The populations best served by WLG:

- Older Teens (ages 16-18)
- Young Adults (ages 19-21, including Opportunity Youth)

To address the unique needs of younger youth, the City should establish a separate track for all first-time SYEP 14 and 15 year-old participants. This track should be focused on career exploration and project-based learning. Under this model, younger youth would not hold a traditional SYEP job as part of their introductory experience to the program. Since this track would replace employment with career exploration, this group could be offered a modest stipend, rather than hourly wages.

Recommended Next Steps:

- DYCD should use the new RFP to codify the proposed program eligibility criteria, as outlined above.
- DYCD, in partnership with CYE, DOE and CEO, should further develop programmatic concepts for the new track for 14 and 15 year-olds and test the concept with a pilot in the summer of 2017. The model should include a blended enrichment experience that includes career exploration and service learning.

4. SYEP and WLG should be directly connected with DOE schools to ensure more cohesive career development experiences for students.

The vast majority of SYEP and WLG participants are enrolled in DOE high schools, suggesting great potential to align these experiences. Yet currently no framework exists to connect school-year and summer programming. As a result, students lose out on the opportunity for a holistic career development experience that could complement classroom learning and help prepare them for the next step to college or employment.

Beyond their six weeks in SYEP, most participants do not receive follow-up support or continued career exploration during the academic year.

Similarly, schools and community groups run a host of career awareness and preparation initiatives throughout the school year, yet none of these are formally linked with SYEP. These school-year programs should be leveraged to prepare students for SYEP, providing an introduction to transferable skills, resume writing and training on workplace norms.

Going forward, DYCD should work with DOE to structure future contracts in ways that allow providers and schools to formally partner together. Under this framework, providers would have a contract with specific high schools and could work with students over several years. This type of partnership would potentially provide more student training and, additionally, ensure more deliberate planning in advance of the summer experience, as well as follow-up through the fall.

Recommended Next Steps:

DYCD should pilot a set of collaborations between DOE schools and SYEP providers during the summer of 2017. The Agency should engage with a specific set of high schools to explore how they can be involved in the preparation and follow-up to students' SYEP experience. Given their missions and internal governance in DOE, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, school networks or Community Schools might make particular sense as partners in this effort.

5. SYEP and WLG should be more directly connected and aligned with other career development experiences to ensure that they build upon and reinforce each other.

Young people need to develop a range of skills over the course of several different career development experiences to be truly ready to enter the workforce.

No young person can learn everything from a single summer or school year experience, no matter how robust or intensive. The participants will benefit most if they are involved in several sequential experiences that allow them to practice and improve on their skills. As noted above, youth first need to gain an awareness of the world of work, followed by opportunities to explore career options and receive hands-on preparation and training. During that training, they should be exposed to such workplace norms as professional dress codes, punctuality, deadlines and professionalism, as well as "hard skills" like financial literacy, administration and computer proficiency.

To that end, the City should consider SYEP and WLG as closely coordinated foundational career pathways programs for youth. The City also should establish more explicit partnerships across all youth workforce programs – for example, the Work Progress Program, Justice Plus, and Young Adult Internship Program to name a few – operated by different City agencies, including DOE, HRA and SBS.

There are a variety of ways the City, through its implementing agencies, should begin to establish these connections.

- First, school-based partnerships (discussed in the previous recommendation) would establish a structure for SYEP providers and educators to communicate and cooperate on their programs. Schools should help optimize their students' SYEP experiences by aligning curriculum and programming with SYEP goals. A direct link between school-year programs and SYEP placement would enable participants to enter SYEP with more career awareness and relevant workplace skills.

- Second, the connection between SYEP and WLG should be seamless. To ensure that SYEP and WLG are better connected there should be a smooth transition from the summer to the school year experience. The current gap in programming – WLG does not begin until October – represents an unnecessary interruption in the work experience. Alternatively, the WLG model could be further modified to provide a single, year-round placement for participants (as opposed to placements with two different employers in the current model).

- Third, DYCD should support participants through multiple SYEP experiences that are coordinated and progressive. In the Task Force's focus groups, both young people and employers indicated interest in the option to repeat a successful SYEP placement. Under this scenario, the student would be paired with the same provider and employer for their second summer in the program. Participants would increase their skills and gain a deeper understanding of the worksite, while employers could continue to invest in committed employees who have already demonstrated their abilities on the job.

- Finally, there is a need for standard protocols on how and when SYEP participants should connect with other City programs to help them move along their trajectory into the workforce. These inter-agency protocols are particularly essential for out-of-school youth, who require greater support. The City should investigate how to best transition this population from SYEP to an appropriate subsequent program, such as WLG or other programs administered by CUNY, DOE, DYCD, HRA or SBS.

Recommended Next Steps:

- DYCD should explore how to best leverage and integrate school-year "work preparation experiences" to better prepare participants for SYEP.

- DYCD should change the application and enrollment processes for WLG to enable a seamless transition from SYEP, starting in the fall of 2017.

- DYCD should test the benefits of placing youth with the same provider and employer for a second summer, starting as a pilot in the summer of 2017.

- Working with City agency partners, DYCD and CYE should develop a comprehensive set of referral protocols between relevant programs.

6. The Vulnerable Youth track can benefit from program enhancements and systems improvements to support its growth.

SYEP can benefit young people from many backgrounds, but it has special importance for vulnerable youth, who have a particular need for dedicated support around obtaining employment.

To meet that need, the City should focus on expanding provider capacity to serve vulnerable youth and strengthening the program model, while continuing to plan for longer-term expansion.

In 2016, SYEP served 3,050 vulnerable young people, more than three times the number from 2014. This growth has stretched providers' capacity to deliver crucial components of the model such as one-on-one mentorship, counseling and support. Given that the Vulnerable Youth program is scheduled to grow to 5,000 participants over the next several years, additional capacity is needed. To scale this growth, there should be a focused effort to both identify additional organizations and help existing providers expand their capacity.

At the same time, it has become apparent that many vulnerable youth could benefit from an even more intensive set of services. As the program continues to scale up, this is an ideal time for the City to work closely with selected providers to develop enhanced career exploration and service learning activities to better meet participants' needs. Additional services could include pre-program orientation, counseling and referrals to other programs on the conclusion of their SYEP experience.

Finally, expansion and enhancement of the Vulnerable Youth programming should be paired with evaluation to support continual program adjustments to better meet participant needs.

Recommended Next Steps:

- The City should work with selected Vulnerable Youth providers to develop enhanced career exploration and service learning activities to better serve the highest-need youth. These enhancements should be piloted during the summer of 2017, with the findings helping to inform the model in the new RFP.
- The City should formally establish a Vulnerable Youth Working Group. DYCD and CYE already convene a regular working group with DOP, DHS, ACS and HRA. This working group could benefit from a more formal charge to support the growth to 5,000 slots over the next several years.

Recommendations on Program Operations and System Building

1. The SYEP timeline should be revamped to support better job development and matching process.

All stakeholders consulted through the Task Force process agreed that program quality is closely tied to program operations. By starting the entire process earlier, providers would have more time to develop quality placements and otherwise raise the quality of the experience for participants. With more lead time, participants would have a better opportunity to match with a job in their preferred field, and employers would be paired with participants who are most interested in and suited for their organization.

The Fiscal Year 2017 Adopted Budget included baseline funding for 60,000 slots in 2016. The guaranteed future funding has allowed DYCD to adjust its timeline to better support providers, worksites and participants.

The Task Force supports the following timeline changes, many of which have already gone into effect:

- **Budget development**

  Historically, DYCD did not finalize each provider organization's budget until January or February. This has now been moved up to November of the prior year.

  Among many other ancillary benefits, this adjusted timeline allows providers to hire staff and fill their participant slots earlier. As a result, providers will ultimately spend more time focusing on program quality and dedicate additional resources to ensure that participants are more engaged during their training.

- **Worksite development**

  Historically, providers were unable to start recruiting SYEP employers, both formally and informally, until February. This process has been moved up to November of the prior year. DYCD will continue to identify opportunities with providers to advance this timeline even further, recognizing that best practice is regular, year-round development.

  The additional time gives providers more opportunity to identify and recruit employers that will increase quality and better serve New York City youth. Completing this process earlier also allows providers more time to focus on program operations.

- **Ladders for Leaders application**

  Historically, the Ladders for Leaders application was not released until January. It has been moved up to November of the prior year.

  This accelerated release provides students more time to complete the application. The process will also more closely resemble the timeline of other external, competitive internship opportunities, which many Ladders for Leaders participants also consider

- **SYEP application release**

  Historically, DYCD did not release the SYEP application until April. This release has now been moved up to February.

  An earlier release will allow more time for outreach to schools and communities about the program, and ensures that anyone who wants to apply has adequate time to do so. Additionally, accelerating the application release means more participants will enroll prior to the start of the program.

- **Lottery and matching**

  Historically, the process did not start until May. This will be moved up to April.

  The additional time will improve providers' ability to match placements to participant interests. It will also limit participant earnings loss for those placed at worksites for less than six weeks, who as a result do not earn the maximum available income.

2. The preparation and orientation of SYEP and WLG participants should be enhanced and adjusted to better reflect the needs of young people

SYEP and WLG participants are best positioned for success when they have a full understanding of the program and clear expectations for their experience. Provider organizations are responsible for sharing key information with applicants and participants, including offering workforce development training and program orientations for all selected participants. While soliciting feedback from participants and employers, it became clear that this process can be improved in a number of ways.

The Task Force recommends that DYCD do the following:

- Include greater detail about provider organizations and potential work sites earlier as part of the application process. This information will allow young people to make more informed decisions about which provider lotteries to participate in, and which jobs to seek out.
- Share existing curricula and learning toolkits with all providers to identify and spread "best practices" and foster discussion and engagement between different provider organizations.
- Involve employers in the SYEP and WLG orientation process. DYCD should develop guidelines for all program providers to use in inviting employers to directly participate in, or offer suggestions for, participant orientations.

3. Provider capacity should be enhanced to support proposed program changes and any continued growth of the system.

Community-based organizations are at the heart of SYEP and WLG's current and future success. How well they carry out their various functions – from recruitment, to job development, to pre-employment training – largely determines the quality of participants' experiences with the program. As the youth workforce program models evolve, it will be important to assess providers' capacity to address the stated goals of the programs. Additionally, as the system continues to expand, DYCD will need to cultivate and support additional providers with the ability to offer services across the different program tracks.

The Task Force recommends that the Administration:

- Ensure that current providers have the capacity and skills to provide the proposed career exploration programming for younger youth.
- Consider facilitating partnerships between providers that are effective in working with youth, and organizations that are stronger in engaging employers to secure program slots. Such partnerships could leverage diverse strengths in the provider community, further diversify the worksite portfolio around the City and reduce the administrative burden recruitment places on provider organizations.
- Start planning now to secure additional providers to support any future growth. There will be a need for more providers if the system continues to grow.
- More effectively facilitate the matching of providers and participants. Developing and requiring the use of a robust employer portal, timekeeping and data management system would also increase provider efficiency.
- Share existing tools and work-based learning toolkits with all providers, which would likely increase best practices as well as promote inter-provider discussion and engagement.
- Dedicate capacity building for participants at Summer Camps. Almost 30 percent of SYEP participants work for DYCD-run summer camps, which effectively provide childcare during the summer for thousands of working parents. SYEP should include a targeted enrollment and training program designed to staff the City's subsidized summer camps and day care programs. A formalized enrollment and training program could create a more effective workforce for the camps.

4. Interagency coordination should ensure the alignment of resources, operations and program goals.

As SYEP and WLG continue to evolve, it will be more important than ever for relevant City agencies to collaborate and plan together. There is a need to develop a broader unified vision around all youth employment and work readiness programs. By directing other agency programming and resources to align with SYEP and WLG vision and goals, the City can support clear, unified and structured pathways for young people. The Task Force recommends that the Administration do the following:

- Establish a standing DOE-DYCD Working Group that is guided by an MOU. Specifically, DYCD and DOE should partner more strategically – both at system and school/provider levels – to share data, develop a new engagement strategy, and standardize messaging about the youth workforce programs across the City's public schools. Data-sharing could also improve both the participant/provider matching process and student engagement throughout the entire school year.
- Formalize the Vulnerable Youth Working Group between DYCD, ACS, DOP, HRA, CYE and DHS. This informal group of agency partners meets on a regular basis and has been instrumental in supporting the rapid growth of the program track over the past several years. As this growth continues – and the model undergoes review – the working group should also be formalized with an MOU.
- Leverage City agencies to become larger SYEP employers. For example, by increasing coordination for older youth, the City could consider engaging with the Fire Department (FDNY) and Police Department (NYPD) to revive programs like Cadet Corps, which offered qualified college men and women apprenticeship programs.

5. Employer engagement should be expanded, diversified and streamlined to ensure the City is cultivating the number and types of diverse job opportunities needed to support the proposed strategy.

Moving forward, expanding and diversifying the pool of SYEP and WLG employers is critical for the system's growth. It is important that the City be able to offer young people a wide range of employment experiences that reflect the diversity of the New York City job market. Of equal importance is to offer mechanisms that make it easier for employers to partner with the City.

The Task Force recommends that the City:

- Create a single, shared job development effort that makes hiring simple, clear and easy for employers. Currently, a single employer may engage and maintain relationships with close to a dozen different City agencies and individuals to meet their talent needs for both youth and adults. This process should be streamlined.
- Customize the City's messaging to a diverse group of potential employers. Employers participate in SYEP and WLG for different reasons. The City's outreach and engagement should reflect this reality.
- Leverage Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), the non-profit community, industry networks and Chambers of Commerce to increase the supply of jobs. Tapping into these networks could further diversify the types of employers as well as develop employment pipelines, particularly for older youth.

6. The City should invest in more regular evaluation of youth employment programs to ensure program goals are being met and to provide a basis for continual program improvement.

The City should enhance the current performance evaluation structure and invest more time, capacity and resources to monitoring and evaluation of SYEP and WLG. This effort, which starts with a rigorous evaluation of participant outcomes, will support continuous program improvement. DYCD will be well positioned to start this work if the City adopts the Task Force's recommendations on the programs' focus and desired outcomes. DYCD should work with CEO to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation plan that, when possible, includes third-party partners and evaluators to assist or consult on monitoring and evaluation efforts.

- Codify the desired outcomes (transferable skills) in a way that they are commonly understood across agencies and providers, and incorporate them into new RFPs and eventual contracts.
- Evaluate the efficacy of the proposed program changes, specifically the skills gained by participants, as well as other participant outcomes. This evaluation should be grounded in the stated purpose and strategy of SYEP and WLG.
- Aggregate and share data with relevant partners and stakeholders on a regular basis.

Appendix

Appendix A - Participants

Task Force Members

- Richard Buery, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives
- Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, City Council Member and Chair, Finance Committee
- Mathieu Eugene, City Council Member and Chair, Youth Services Committee
- Steven Matteo, City Council Member and Minority Leader
- Bill Chong, Commissioner, Department of Youth and Community Development
- Gabrielle Fialkoff, Senior Advisor to the Mayor and Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships
- Emary Aronson, Managing Director, Education and Relief Fund, Robin Hood Foundation
- David Barth, Director of Youth, Opportunity and Learning, Ford Foundation
- Laurie Dien, Vice President of Programs, The Pinkerton Foundation
- Lucy Friedman, President, ExpandED Schools
- David Jones, President and Chief Executive Officer, Community Service Society
- Jennifer March, Executive Director, Citizen's Committee for Children
- Lou Miceli, Executive Director, JobsFirstNYC
- David Nocenti, Executive Director, Union Settlement
- Amy Ellen Schwartz, Daniel Patrick Moynihan Chair in Public Affairs and Professor of Economics, Public Administration, and International Affairs, Syracuse University, the Maxwell School
- Cidra Sebastien, Associate Executive Director, The Brotherhood/Sister Sol
- Sharon Sewell-Fairman, Executive Director, Workforce Professionals Institute
- Susan Stamler, Executive Director, United Neighborhood Houses
- William Wingate, Respite Care Worker, Center for Human Development & Family Services
- Kathy Wylde, President and Chief Executive Officer, Partnership for NYC

Working Group Members

- Jessica Ackerman, Senior Finance Analyst, City Council Finance Division
- Ivan Acosta, Legislative and Budget Director, Office of Council Member Ferreras-Copeland
- Daniel Agosto, Director of Youth Workforce Development, Union Settlement
- Darren Bloch, Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC
- Andrea Bowen, Policy Analyst, United Neighborhood Houses
- Jean-Marie Callan, Deputy Director of Programs and Evaluation, Center for Economic Opportunity
- Bruce Carmel, Deputy Executive Director, Workforce Professionals Training Institute
- David Fischer, Executive Director of NYC Center for Youth Employment
- Stephanie Gendell, Associate Director for Policy and Government Relations, Citizen's Committee for Children
- Leah Hebert, Director of Intergovernmental and Program Partnerships, Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC
- Carson Hicks, Deputy Executive Director, Center for Economic Opportunity
- Elizabeth Hoffman, Principal Finance Analyst, City Council Finance Division
- Caitlin Lucchino, Director of Special Projects, Partnership for NYC
- Latonia McKinney, Director, City Council Finance Division

- Mike Nolan, Senior Advisor for Policy and Strategy, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy
- Marjorie Parker, Deputy Executive Director, JobsFirstNYC
- Merrill Pond, Senior Vice President, Partnership for NYC
- Sanjiv Rao, Program Officer, Ford Foundation
- Kevin Riley, Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives
- Regina Poreda Ryan, Deputy Director, City Council Finance Division
- Peter Spencer, Chief of Operations, Office of Council Member Matteo
- David Suarez, Chief of Staff, Office of Council Member Eugene
- Saskia Traill, Senior Vice President of Policy & Research, ExpandED Schools
- Lazar Treschan, Director of Youth Policy, Community Service Society
- Andre White, Associate Commissioner of Workforce Programs, Department of Youth & Community Development
- Eisha Wright, Unit Head, City Council Finance Division

Facilitators – Youth Development Institute

- Sabrina Evans-Ellis, Executive Director
- Karen Mahler, Director, Strategy & Innovation

Appendix B

SYEP Programs in Other Jurisdictions

A number of other cities have implemented successful summer youth employment programs that have shown encouraging outcomes similar to those observed in SYEP. The following descriptions represent a small sample of prominent programs across the U.S.

- The One Summer Chicago initiative, a collaboration of city government, community-based organizations (CBOs), and private companies, provides employment and internships to youth ages 14 to 24. The six-week program served 30,000 young Chicagoans in 2016, and according to a study conducted by the Universities of Chicago and Pennsylvania, reduced violent crime arrests among participants by 43 percent.[7]

- Washington DC's Marion Berry Summer Youth Employment Program offers six-week placements for District youth ages 14 to 24 in CBOs, private firms and the public sector. The program focuses on providing participants with a meaningful, paid work experience through career exploration and skill development. Serving just over 13,000 youth, the program has the highest per capita SYEP participation rate for eligible youth – 13.4 percent – of all major cities. Additionally, as a result of limited funding from private and federal partners, the program has a larger budget when compared to other localities.[8] In 2013, an independent study verified that, as a result of DC SYEP, a majority of participants understood the importance of going to college and could thoughtfully explain the careers in which they were interested.[9]

- Los Angeles' Hire LA's Youth program has shown equally positive results. The program prioritizes training opportunities, on-the-job mentoring, financial literacy workshops, and other resources so that participants better understand the real-world expectations of employers. An evaluation by California State University Northridge confirmed that Hire LA's Youth participants showed statistically significant gains in career knowledge as well as clarity about their career interests. Additionally, participants, as a result of the program, were more likely to be employed seven months after their summer job.[10] Hire LA's Youth served more than 13,000 14 to 24 year-olds in 2016.

- The Boston Summer Jobs program, which serves 10,000 16 to 24 year-olds annually, provides youth with training related to job readiness and career exploration. The program targets low-income youth and lasts seven weeks. As part of this model, youth are either placed in a subsidized position – for example, with a CBO – or a job with a private sector employer, arranged by one of four intermediaries under contract with the City. According to an evaluation conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, program participants report "additional job readiness skills, higher academic aspirations, and more positive attitudes toward their communities."[11]

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[7] Heller, S. B. "Summer jobs reduce violence among disadvantaged youth." Science 346, no. 6214 (2014): 1219-223.

[8] Patterson, Kathleen. Review of Summer Youth Employment Programs in Eight Major Cities and the District of Columbia. Report. Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, 2016.

[9] The District of Columbia One City One Summer Initiative: 2013 Report of Findings. Report. The DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, 2013.

[10] Moore, Richard W., Cristina Rubino, Akanksha Bedi, Daniel Blake, and Julie Coveney. Hire LA: Summer Youth Employment Program Evaluation Report 2014. Executive Summary. The College of Business and Economics, California State University Northridge.

[11] Modestino, Alicia Sasser, and Trinh Nhuyen. The Potential for Summer Youth Employment Programs to Reduce Inequality: What Do We Know? Issue brief no. 3. Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 2016.

Youth Employment Task Force Report

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Department of
Youth & Community
Development

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEES ON FINANCE
AND YOUTH SERVICES

FISCAL YEAR 2018 EXECUTIVE BUDGET

BILL CHONG
COMMISSIONER

MAY 5, 2017

Good morning Chairwoman Ferreras-Copeland, Chairman Eugene and members of the Finance and Youth Services Committee. I'm Bill Chong, Commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community Development. I'm joined by Andre White, Associate Commissioner, Youth Workforce Development, and Jagdeen Phanor, Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Budget and Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on DYCD's Fiscal Year 2018 Executive Budget.

With summertime just around the corner, planning for this year's Summer Youth Employment Program is well underway. Mayor de Blasio has demonstrated yet again, his commitment to youth employment, by adding $15.6 million in the Executive budget to support the City's portion of the minimum wage increase for SYEP. This investment is in addition to the 5,000 new slots announced in the Preliminary budget, which increases the total number of baselined SYEP slots to 65,000 for this summer.

And as part of the ongoing partnership between the Mayor and City Council to support opportunities for young people to work and explore careers, the Youth Employment Task Force report was released last week. Chaired by Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery and City Council Finance Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, the task force was charged with assessing the key areas of growth and improvement in the City's youth workforce development programs. The Task Force also developed recommendations to inform the future direction of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and Work, Learn and Grow (WLG). The recommendations fall under two categories: program focus and program quality; and operations and system-building. Some key recommendations include:

1. **Investing in enhanced support services for SYEP Vulnerable Youth program participants.** As part of building provider capacity and strengthening the program model to serve vulnerable youth, enhanced career development and service learning activities can be developed to meet the unique needs of this population. Additional services could also include pre-program orientation, counseling and referral services on conclusion of one's SYEP experience.

2. **Strengthening connections between SYEP providers and schools to improve in-school career development.** Creating more deliberate partnerships between schools and SYEP would allow students to receive dedicated City support for career exploration during the school year.

3. **Facilitating seamless entry between the City's youth employment initiatives.** Strengthening interagency connections and transitions to Work, Learn and Grow and other DYCD and city agency youth employment programs, will benefit all SYEP participants, particularly disconnected youth who require more support. Participants can build on their SYEP experience through sequential opportunities to further explore careers and the world of work, while developing job skills.

4. **Creating a specific Younger Youth track focused on career exploration.** Younger program participants would benefit from a more tailored SYEP experience focused on career exploration and project-based learning.

5. **Revamping the SYEP timeline to better support the job development and employer matching process.** A prime benefit of having a significant portion of SYEP funding baselined, is that program planning and start-up activities can start much earlier. Providers have more time to plan, develop quality job placements and raise the quality of experience for participants.

6. **Boosting system-building efforts through new training programs, leveraging of available resources, new partnerships and data systems upgrades.** Enhancing the key elements of the Summer Youth Employment Program and Work, Learn and Grow, such as provider capacity, interagency connections, employer engagement, and evaluation, will improve overall program quality and operational efficiency.

The report's recommendations will be incorporated into a concept paper we expect to release this summer, which allows the provider community to submit feedback on proposed enhancements to the City's youth workforce programming. The recommendations and the concept paper will also inform DYCD's SYEP Request for Proposals, which we expect to release in Fall 2017.

I want to thank again, Chairwoman Ferreras-Copeland, Chairman Eugene and Council Member Matteo for their leadership on this Task Force. I also want to thank their team of colleagues, Council Members Chin, Gibson, Rodriguez, Torres and Williams for also supporting the work of the Task Force.

On April 17, DYCD released its Beacon Community Centers RFP. The RFP includes the new investments made to the Beacon program, which were first announced in last year's Executive budget – each Beacon will be funded at $550,000 in Fiscal Year 2018, an increase from the $400,000 in this current fiscal year. The RFP also includes funding for new Beacon sites, raising the total number of Beacons to 91.

I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for his leadership in expanding Beacon funding. I also want to thank the City Council, Chairwoman Ferreras-Copeland and Chairman Eugene, for your leadership and steadfast support of Beacons over the years. These new Beacon resources represent the first funding increase in over two decades, and is a very appropriate way to celebrate the Beacon program, which turned 25 last year.

Under Mayor de Blasio, DYCD has significantly expanded its funding to support School's Out NYC middle school afterschool programs, offering access to every middle school student that is interested in a program. Currently, over 66,000 youth are enrolled in SONYC programs citywide. The Executive budget builds on the Mayor's historic investment and commitment, by adding $10.7 million to fund another 3,600 SONYC program seats. Some new middle schools and those that opted out of the 2014 expansion RFP, will now have an opportunity to offer afterschool programming through SONYC. We are developing our plan for how these seats will be allocated, and can share more details soon.

In the Fiscal Year 2018 Executive budget, Mayor de Blasio continues his strong commitment to youth, families and communities by again investing resources into DYCD. We are very excited for the opportunity to further expand our programs, and build on our success. We look forward to continuing to work with the City Council to create opportunities that improve the lives of all New Yorkers. My staff and I are ready to answer any questions. Thank you.

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