

# Investing in Equity:

## Takeaways from the 2023 New York State Executive Budget

Governor Hochul's 2023 Executive Budget includes a number of critical investments that will help to support New York's children and families beginning at birth through college and into the workforce.

The Executive Budget recognizes the incredible toll the ongoing pandemic is taking on New Yorkers, and promises to offer much-needed supports to help students and families get back on track and recover mentally, academically, and economically.

As this budget season and legislative session progresses, we urge lawmakers to make a commitment to New York families by protecting the provisions that aim to foster more equity for all of our residents, and by also considering other critical equity proposals that would benefit New Yorkers for years to come.

### 9 Key Equity Investments in the 2023 Budget:

- Addressing lost instructional time and mental health.** Our polling throughout the pandemic has consistently found that the vast majority of parents are concerned about how the pandemic is impacting their children academically and mentally, with an astounding 94% of parents indicating in September that they were concerned about how schools were supporting their child's emotional well-being. This budget's investment of \$100 million over two years into the Recover from COVID School Program provides much-needed financial support to districts serving students with the greatest needs to offer resources such as summer learning, afterschool programs, and access to mental health services. Read our September poll findings [here](#).



and 43% of Latinx parents skipped or reduced the size of their own and/or their child's meals as a result of the pandemic. No child should go hungry, and the continuation of free school meals for all students regardless of income eligibility is a starting point that will benefit approximately three million students attending nearly 6,000 public and nonpublic schools in New York State. Read our September poll findings [here](#).

- Investing in housing for runaway and unhoused youth.** The Executive Budget's proposed \$2 million increase in funding for runaway and unhoused youth services will provide critical resources to some of our most vulnerable students, providing them with some stability and support at a time of tremendous uncertainty. Learn how New York can support students experiencing homelessness during the pandemic [here](#).



- Providing free meals for students.** Our September poll found that nearly half of Black parents (48%)



- **Committing to a statewide attainment goal.** The Executive Budget includes a comprehensive plan to make higher education in New York more affordable and accessible, and to help two-thirds of New Yorkers earn a high-quality postsecondary credential or degree by 2030. Now more than ever, economic opportunity and financial security are intertwined with educational attainment. Committing to an attainment goal of two-thirds of New Yorkers of all races and ethnicities by 2030 would mean that more than 6.5 million residents would hold a postsecondary degree or credential by 2030. Learn more about how postsecondary credentials and degrees lead to family-sustaining wages [here](#).



- **Improving access to higher education financial aid.** The Executive Budget includes several key investments into making college more affordable for all students. That includes the \$150 million commitment to expand the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), allowing part-time students and students who have been impacted by the criminal justice system to participate, as well as a 10% increase in financial support for students who are economically disadvantaged. The proposed budget also expands the types and number of high-quality workforce credentials that will be eligible for state funding. An additional \$24M has been allocated to support students historically underserved by the education system through opportunity programs and training centers at CUNY. Learn more about why financial aid for college matters [here](#).



- **Increasing family income eligibility for child care subsidies.** Increasing eligibility for child care subsidies is a crucial step to helping tens of thousands of New York families access the child care they need so that parents can participate in and advance in the workforce, and to set New York on the path to economic recovery. Learn more about the importance of quality and affordable child care and other issues in early childhood education [here](#).



- **Supporting child care workers.** The first three years are precisely the time of life where deeply committed, educated teachers are needed to maximize the intense aptitude for learning with which children are born. Therefore, supporting the early childhood workforce dedicated to New York's youngest children and their families becomes a vital mission, now more than ever. Gov. Hochul's proposed \$75 million into the child care workforce is a testament to the crucial role they play in early childhood development. Learn more about supporting New York's child care workforce [here](#).



- **Investing in home visiting.** Voluntary home visiting programs provide support, education, and referrals to families of young children in their homes. Research shows that home visiting decreases child abuse and neglect, increases school readiness, and improves maternal and infant health outcomes. The Executive Budget's direction of an additional \$11 million to home visiting programs, bringing the total level of State support to \$41.5 million, will allow the program to serve an additional 1,600 families statewide. Learn more about home visiting programs in New York [here](#).



- **Expand access to holistic prenatal and postnatal care.** New York has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the country. For every 100,000 live births in our state, there are 20 maternal deaths, compared to our national average of 17.4. Gov. Hochul's proposal to invest more than \$20 million annually to expand access to holistic prenatal and postnatal care will help improve maternal health outcomes, reduce racial disparities, and advance equity for mothers across New York. Additionally, it is critical that New York work with the federal government to expand Medicaid postpartum coverage for mothers to one year, increasing it from 60 days after they give birth. Learn more about maternal health in New York [here](#).



### 3 Equity Issues We Want to Know More About:

Although the 2023 Executive Budget includes a number of promising initiatives that will promote educational equity for all New Yorkers, there are several items not included in the budget that should be considered as the budget and legislative season progresses.

- **Investment in explicit strategies to improve diversity in the educator workforce.** Gov. Hochul included in her State of the State several priorities that would prioritize diversity in the K-12 educator workforce, including the creation of the Empire State Teacher Residency Program, funding for a new cohort of the Master Teacher Program, and support for school staff members interested in earning their professional certification. These investments are all worthy of further exploration as New York seeks to foster an educator workforce that reflects the rich diversity of the state. Additionally, the Executive Budget proposes investing \$106 million for additional full-time faculty at SUNY and CUNY. This investment should be coupled with a commitment to recruiting and retaining a diverse and representative staff in the higher education system. Learn more about educator diversity in New York [here](#).



Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes and Senator John Liu would ensure that more students have the opportunity to participate in these courses. Additionally, Gov. Hochul's State of the State included a proposal to expand access to dual enrollment programs that would allow high school students to simultaneously earn postsecondary credits. This investment is still worth consideration. Any investment, however, should be directed to programs that demonstrate proven results and coupled with a requirement the New York State Education Department collect and publicly report the outcomes of any such programs receiving this funding. Learn more about access to rigorous coursework [here](#).

- **Supporting efforts to increase financial aid for college completion.**



Gov. Hochul's proposal to create a statewide FAFSA Completion Corps that would direct resources to local experts to help students complete financial aid forms would be a critical step toward helping more students to realize the dream of a higher education and should be considered, as well as including FAFSA completion as a part of the culminating high school graduation activities. Learn more about FAFSA completion in New York [here](#).

- **Improving access to advanced courses.** Even before the pandemic, students from low-income backgrounds and American Indian, Black, and Latinx students were less likely to be enrolled in key advanced courses than their not-low-income and White peers. Legislation introduced by Assembly



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