

2023 Policy Agenda for Educational Equity

For students across New York State – particularly students of color and those from low-income backgrounds – the 2022-2023 school year presents an unprecedented opportunity to catch up and thrive after three years of interrupted instruction. Now that schools have received billions in federal and state funding to address long standing inequities exacerbated by the pandemic, state and local leaders must ensure all students receive equitable access to evidence-based, rigorous teaching and learning that prepares them for success in any postsecondary opportunity.

As a statewide leader in the fight for educational equity, The Education Trust–New York is prioritizing the following statewide policies in the upcoming budget season. In 2023, state leaders must adopt a stronger sense of urgency about addressing the tragic conditions in many educational settings across the state. We urge state leadership to prioritize the solutions outlined below to ensure a better future for the youngest New Yorkers.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- **Access to Affordable, High-Quality**

Child Care: All families with infants and toddlers should have access to and be supported in accessing affordable, high-quality, safe, and culturally responsive child care and early learning experiences.

We support investments that seek more universal supports for infants, toddlers, and their families. We believe every little New Yorker, age 0-3, should be supported by a universal child care system complete with infrastructure that prioritizes quality through a transparent, equity-driven quality rating improvement system and a justly compensated workforce.



- **Access to Health and Developmental**

Care: We believe all families with infants and toddlers should have supported access to programs that value strong and positive relationships with families.

Support for families must ensure that parents, infants, and toddlers receive relevant screenings and a comprehensive and complementary set of services that promote positive maternal health outcomes and infant and toddler development.



- **Reducing Childhood Poverty:** We support investments and policies that advance economic security. Families with young children and from low-income backgrounds require more opportunities to achieve economic security like well-designed subsidies, voucher systems, and poverty-fighting tax credits. Every family should have the resources to provide nutritious foods, quality housing, health, and child care.






- **Systems Alignment:** In order to meet the needs of families and their young children, New York's health, mental health, education, child care, social services, and safety net systems require better connection and coordination. We support policies that address the significant infrastructure fractures in the state's early childhood systems; as such, we need transparent, aligned, and disaggregated data systems that inform the current needs of children and that provide the foundation of data-informed policy and advocacy efforts. These systems currently require adequate funding to meet the needs of families with infants and toddlers and child care providers.

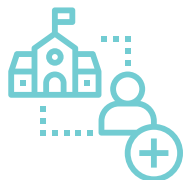
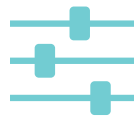




K-12 EDUCATION

Academic Excellence



- **Early Literacy:** Every child in New York should be able to read on grade level. State leaders must act to ensure school districts and teacher preparation programs are using evidence-based resources and teaching materials aligned with the science of reading to improve 3rd grade reading proficiency. 
- **Math Instruction and High-Quality Instructional Materials:** National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results show that New York ranks 46th nationally in 4th grade Math performance. We support policies, regulations, and investments that incentivize the use of high-quality instructional materials, including evidence-based curricula and job-embedded professional learning opportunities for current and pre-service teachers. 
- **Teacher Diversity:** New York's educator workforce does not come close to matching the rich diversity of our state's students. Research is clear that having teachers of color improves outcomes for all students and Ed Trust–NY supports investments that advance recruitment and retention of educators of color. 

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS:



- **Course Access and Dual Enrollment:** Across New York State, students of color and from low-income backgrounds are denied access to advanced coursework and dual enrollment programs that would set them on a path to postsecondary success. We support policies that create more opportunity and access to these opportunities while providing information to families about the benefits of enrolling in advanced classes and dual enrollment programs. 
- **Stronger Graduation Requirements:** Ed Trust–NY supports policies that strengthen graduation requirements, including administration of all Regents exams, an end to state policy changes that make it easier for students to graduate, and increased data collection and transparency around Regents exam performance and postsecondary student success to determine how well graduates are faring in college and career. 
- **Workforce Readiness:** Many high school graduates lack the basic literacy and numeracy skills necessary to pass workforce exams and secure good paying jobs that promote social mobility. Ed Trust–NY supports policies that strengthen Career and Technical Education programs and other pipelines to skilled trades and well-paid job opportunities. 
- **College Remediation, Persistence, and Completion:** Too many recent New York high school graduates are entering college without the skills necessary to succeed. As a result, students are forced to take non-credit bearing remedial classes, resulting in increased debt and lower graduation rates. Ed Trust–NY supports policies that eliminate the use of remedial courses at community colleges by replacing them with co-requisite courses, while also providing wrap-around services to support postsecondary degree completion. 



SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS:

- **Mental Health Support:** To address the impact of the pandemic on students' mental, social, and emotional health, we support policies that provide increased counseling and other mental health services in schools, particularly those most affected by pandemic school closures. 
- **School Discipline:** Exclusionary school discipline systems continue to disproportionately impact students of color across New York, and we support policies focused on restorative justice and other positive alternatives that keep students in the classroom. 

RESOURCE EQUITY:

- **American Rescue Plan Funding:** Schools across New York have received over \$9 billion to address learning loss and other pandemic-related challenges. We support policies that incentivize schools to adopt evidence-based instructional strategies while promoting stronger state oversight and transparency on how funds are being utilized and evaluated. 
- **P-20 Longitudinal Data System:** New York is in desperate need of a comprehensive system that connects statewide data from early childhood through K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce. We support adoption of a P-20 data system that would help leaders answer policy challenges, target resources, and better support students on their educational journey. 
- **FAFSA Completion:** Research shows that 90% of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA go to college immediately after graduation — compared to just 55% of seniors who do not complete the FAFSA. FAFSA completion is particularly important for students of color and from low-income backgrounds and Ed Trust–NY supports policies that encourage FAFSA completion across the state. 