Students Can't Wait
Equity Priorities for New Yorkers in 2023 Briefing

Welcome!

The Education Trust—New York
Dr. Dia Bryant
Executive Director, Ed Trust–NY

Samuel L. Radford III
Director, Community Action Organization Better Schools, Better Neighborhoods Initiative, Co-Chair of We The Parents

Jeff Smink
Deputy Director, Ed Trust–NY

Kalima Johnson
Associate Director of Advocacy & Partnerships, Ed Trust–NY

Elizabeth Angeles
Vice President of Advocacy, United Way of NYC
The State of Education

• The pandemic **exacerbated** existing inequities

• Students of color and from low-income backgrounds **most impacted**

• Now is the opportunity for **urgency** and a renewed focus on equity and innovation
WHAT’S BEHIND THE STATE’S IMPROVED GRADUATION RATES?

REGENTS EXAM EXEMPTIONS AND REGULATORY CHANGES MAY BE THE CAUSE OF INFLATED GRADUATION RATES

Since 2016, New York’s graduation rates have climbed 8 percentage points, with student of the year increases in Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. The class of 2023 continued the upward trend, with an 8th grade graduation rate of 81%, a 12% increase over the 2014 cohort. While this is a great news, the surface, recent changes to state graduation standards related to difficult graduation requirements for students who are preparing students—especially students who have historically been underrepresented by the education system—may be counterproductive.

For the past three years, the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted regulatory administration of high school Regents exams. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has been cancelling Regents exams in June 2020, 2021, and 2022, with the decision to cancel the 2022 exams that make up the five Regents exams required of students to graduate from high school. In 2021, NYSED explored the possibility of replacing Regents exams and adopting a growing number of existing tests designed to assess the burden of pandemics on students and communities.

Regulatory changes during the pandemic continue a pattern that began several years ago. Beginning in 2016, the state has made changes to graduation requirements to provide more pathways and flexibility for students to earn a high school diploma. While the move for additional flexibility was necessary to address the challenges of the pandemic, the new requirements are based on outdated and oversimplified assumptions about what students need to succeed in college and careers.

THE TIME FOR URGENCY

New York Schools and the American Dream

A CRITICAL MOMENT:
Governor Hochul’s State of the State presents ideas and opportunities to advance educational equity

Governor Hochul’s 2023 State of the State includes several critical investments that will help to support New York’s children and families building at birth through college and into the workforce. But there is still more work to be done to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to the educational experiences that will allow them to achieve world-class earning wages and engage in other communities.

This is a critical time for New York, as the state continues to rebuild its economy and seeks an engaging and persistent pandemic while also facing a housing recession. New York faces a crisis. It is imperative that state leaders prioritize equity and support families and communities who have historically been underserved by our education systems.

Many of the proposals in Hochul’s State of the State aim to do just that.

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 interrupt cycles of poverty and supporting additional legislation that focuses more equity for all our residents.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE STATE OF THE STATE

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INCREASE ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE
Governor Hochul’s proposal to increase eligibility for child care assistance will make child care more affordable for families with an annual income below the Federal poverty line—ensuring families earning up to 150% of New York’s median income receive assistance.

A CRITICAL MOMENT | The Education Trust—New York

RePRINT PROFICIENCY

Analysis of 2022 assessment data underscores the need to urgently address the impact of interrupted instruction

Recently released assessment results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the New York State Department of Education confirm what many suspected about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning. In 2022, students in third, fourth, and eighth grades—across all subjects—suffered a significant drop in performance. As a result, many school districts intensified—through additional resources to the students and schools who suffered the greatest impact.

Schools have been through major changes since 2016, the last year that New York State released comparable statewide assessment data. Even with declining enrollments and other challenges, improving 2019-2020 assessment results in 2021-2022 provides the public with an important impression of the impact on the pandemic on student learning and numeracy skills. While the pandemic has impacted students in multiple ways, including many that are difficult to track, standardized test scores remain one of the most effective ways to measure student proficiency comparably at scale.

Since the 2018-19 school year, New York State public schools have seen a significant decrease in the number of students enrolled in public schools. According to the number of students who took the test, this rate has decreased. However, the percentage of students tested has remained relatively consistent.

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<th>Participation</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
<th>2022-23</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students</td>
<td>1,900,750</td>
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<td>Participation Rate</td>
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<td>Students Eligible</td>
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<td>Students Tested</td>
<td>11,146,060</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation Rate</td>
<td>84%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

New York Equity Coalition
The State of Education

• Districts still have an unprecedented infusion of federal and state funds to spend

• With student outcome data, state and district leaders can target resources to schools and students most in need and adjust strategies as needed
Logistics and Q&A

• At the end of our presentations, we’ll have time for Q&A

• If you have a question, please use the Q&A function at the bottom of your screen to submit a question

• Please feel free to use the chat function to introduce yourselves and chat
Use of Pandemic Relief Funding

'21-'22 New York State Assessment Results

Equity Priorities
Use of Pandemic Relief Funding

New York received $9 billion in ARPA funds, with at least 20% targeted to address student learning loss.

Districts have until 2024 to spend funds.

As of Sept., districts across the state had spent less than 10% of their ARPA funds and less than 20% of all ESSER funding.

This places New York State 49th in spending nationally.
Use of Pandemic Relief Funding

Our Recommendations

• Districts revise their ARPA funding strategies based on prior spending, student assessment data, and teacher feedback.

• Districts target spending based on student and school needs, with focus on evidence-based resources in early literacy, math instruction, high impact tutoring, and mental health.

• NYSED provide more guidance and technical help to districts on how to effectively spend these funds and evaluate the impact of spending on student outcomes.
State of Education: Literacy

Less than half of all tested students in grade 3-8 were proficient in ELA.

Only 36% of Black and Latinx students were proficient.

There was a 6% decline in 3rd and 4th grade ELA proficiency, the most important indicator of student success, since 2019.
Our Recommendations

• Utilize new state and federal funding to invest in evidence-based early literacy instruction aligned with the science of reading in grades K-3

• Provide high-impact tutoring, with targeted support to student subgroups below proficiency

• Utilize community partners to provide additional literacy support afterschool and during the summer
Less than half of all tested students in grade 3-8 were proficient math.

Math proficiency declined significantly by 9% between the ‘18-19 and '21-22 school years.

Only 24% of 8th graders were proficient. 8th grade math represents a key transition point to future advanced STEM courses.
Our Recommendations

• Utilize new state and federal funding to invest in high-quality instructional materials, including evidence-based curricula and job-embedded professional learning opportunities

• Provide high-impact tutoring, with targeted support to student subgroups below proficiency
New York State Graduation Measures

Teacher Diversity

Elizabeth Angeles
Vice President of Advocacy
United Way of New York City
New York Equity Coalition
State of Education: Graduation Measures

While New York’s graduation rate has risen over 9% since 2016...

The vast majority (71%) of 2021 graduates relied on at least one Regents exam exemption.

Graduation rates for English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students from low-income backgrounds have increased, with a disproportionate reliance on exam exemptions.
Our Recommendations

• Districts should utilize new federal and state funding to help students meet graduation requirements by identifying students at risk of not graduating and providing them with extra support, tutoring, and post-secondary planning

• Administer Regents exams to all eligible students and eliminate provisions that have lowered passing rates to 50%

• Increase the use of dual enrollment programs and improve access to advanced coursework across the state, particularly to students of color and from low-income backgrounds

• Maintain rigorous graduation requirements with an objective measure of student performance
Teacher Diversity

77% of teachers across the state were White, even though the majority of NY students are of color.

While 29% of NY students are Latinx, only 8% of teachers are.

More than 1 in 5 NY students attend schools without any teachers of color on staff.

Students of color are far more likely to attend schools with more than 5 new teachers compared to their White peers, White students also had overwhelmingly more access to the most experienced teachers than students of color.
Teacher Diversity

Our Recommendations

• Strengthen the teacher preparation pipeline for future teachers and school leaders of color, including expansion of the state Teacher Opportunity Corps grant program, “Grow Your Own” initiatives; career pathways and innovative alternative certification pilots; and residency programs and other field work

• Improve recruitment and hiring at the state and school district level by collecting and using data to examine school district practices and addressing implicit bias in the hiring process

• Focus greater attention on retention, support, and career advancement for teachers of color by developing cohorts of educators of color and investing in mentorship and career ladders for current and aspiring teacher, school, and district leaders
Advanced Coursework

K-12 Enrollment Trends

Samuel L. Radford III
Director, Community Action Organization Better Schools, Better Neighborhoods Initiative, Co-Chair of We The Parents New York Equity Coalition
Course Access

Students who are from low-income backgrounds and American Indian, Black, and Latinx students are under-represented in advanced coursework.

They are also more likely than their White peers to attend schools where advanced courses are not offered.

And even in schools that offer advanced coursework, students who are from low-income backgrounds and Black and Latinx students are under-enrolled.
Course Access

Our Recommendations

• Prioritize dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate programs in high-need school districts

• Require districts to provide every family with information about course offerings, enrollment criteria and supports in multiple languages

• Enable automatic enrollment in the next available advanced course for students that demonstrate readiness using multiple measures, with the option for families to opt out

• Incentivize collaboration between local school districts and institutions of higher education
Traditional public school enrollment declined overall by 8% between the ‘17-18 and ‘21-22 school years statewide.

Enrollment in public charter schools increased by 24% while homeschool enrollment increased by 113%.

The Rochester City School District and NYC DOE had the most dramatic declines of the state’s largest city districts, at 15% and 13%.
State of Education: Enrollment

Our Recommendations

• Create infrastructure for authentic parent engagement

• Collect and share bright spots

• Examine the root causes of enrollment changes

• Invest in a cradle-to-career state longitudinal data system
Equity Priorities

Key Takeaways from the 2023 State of the State address

Kalima Johnson
Associate Director of Advocacy & Partnerships
Ed Trust–NY
Key equity priorities from the State of the State

• Historic new investments in public education through Foundation Aid

• Establishing high-impact tutoring programs across the state to address unfinished learning

• Creation of new early college high school and P-TECH programs

• Increased support for youth mental health

• Creating a robust high school-college-workforce pipeline
Looking forward to the 2023 legislative session

- Advanced Coursework
- Teacher Diversity
- FAFSA
- Early Literacy
- P-20 Data System
Contact Us

Dr. Dia Bryant
Executive Director, Ed Trust–NY
DBryant@EdTrustNY.org

Jeff Smink
Deputy Director, Ed Trust–NY
JSmink@EdTrustNY.org

Kalima Johnson
Associate Director of
Advocacy and Partnerships, Ed Trust–NY
KJohnson@EdTrustNY.org