



2024 Policy Agenda for Educational Equity

For students, children, and families across New York State — particularly those of color and from low-income backgrounds — the 2024 legislative session presents a critical opportunity to strengthen our educational system by providing all children with the resources and skills necessary for future success. This includes holistic support for children and families beginning at birth; evidence-based instruction in reading and math beginning in prekindergarten; and robust pathways to postsecondary opportunities starting in middle school.

As a statewide leader in the fight for educational equity, The Education Trust–New York prioritizes the following statewide legislation and policies for this legislative session, urging state leaders to support these solutions to create a brighter future for the youngest New Yorkers.

2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

K-12 Education

- **Early Literacy:** Every child in New York has the ability to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade. State leaders must act with urgency to ensure school districts and teacher preparation programs are using evidence-based resources and teaching materials aligned with the science of reading while empowering parents, caregivers, and non-profits to play a key role in supporting reading and language development.



❖ **Ed Trust–NY supports Governor Hochul’s Back to Basics budget proposal (A8803/S8303) and The Right to Read bill (Carroll/Hoylman-Sigal) (A2897A/S5480A).**

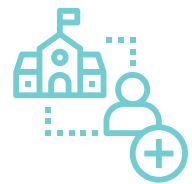
- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion:** Research shows that 90% of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA go to college immediately after graduation — compared to just 55% of seniors who do not. Completing the application is particularly important for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds as it provides the



financial support necessary to make a college education possible and affordable. Ed Trust–NY supports policies that encourage all high school seniors, regardless of their postsecondary plans to complete FAFSA.

❖ **Ed Trust–NY supports the Governor’s universal FAFSA proposal (A8806/S8306) and S8148 (Gounardes).**

- **Dual Enrollment:** Ed Trust–NY supports policies that provide equitable access to college credit in high school for students while increasing effectiveness by ensuring programs center equity, provide intentional experiences, and are accountable to both student performance and success in college and career. We support efforts to utilize the New York Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) to fund college-level courses at the secondary level, only after credit has been earned by a student and such credit has subsequently been applied toward their postsecondary degree.



❖ **Ed Trust–NY supports S5616, which would utilize TAP funds to support dual enrollment**

access, success, and attainment (Mayer).

- **High-Impact Tutoring:** High-impact tutoring can be a critical intervention to support academic acceleration in reading and math, particularly as districts make long-term shifts to evidence-based instruction. High impact tutoring can also help thousands of New York students recover from the impact of interrupted instruction on their learning.



• Ed Trust–NY supports **A7788/S8327 (Cunningham/Fernandez).**

Early Childhood Education

- **Child Care Workforce/Child Care Access:** The Executive Budget includes \$1.8B to expand access to child care assistance, as well as an investment of federal, temporary pandemic relief funding for the short-term stabilization of programs; it is still necessary to support the workforce in a more sustainable way.



• Ed Trust–NY supports several initiatives in this area, including:

- **Creation of a permanent state child care workforce fund; and**
- **A4986A/S5327A (Hevesi/Brisport), which would decouple parents' work hours from eligibility for child care assistance/subsidy.**

- **Early Intervention (EI):**

Families, especially in rural and under-resourced areas, have a difficult time obtaining EI services during the critical early years of brain development. Without these essential services, children often struggle to learn all the skills needed for success in school and beyond.



• Ed Trust–NY supports:

- **The Governor's proposal to increase reimbursement rates by 5%, with an additional 4% increase in rural or under-served areas (A8803/S8303) and urges an increase to 11% for in-person visits statewide;**
- **Reform of the methodology for EI reimbursement rates to accurately reflect the true cost of care; and**
- **Creation of a student loan forgiveness program (A8455-Paulin).**

- **Infant and Maternal Health Care:**

New York has recently implemented several initiatives that should improve maternal and infant health outcomes, such as increasing access to postpartum coverage to one year and expanding Medicaid coverage of doula services.



• Ed Trust–NY supports the Governor's proposals to extend paid leave to the prenatal period (adding an additional 40 hours) and to institute multi-year continuous Medicaid and Child Health Plus (CHP) eligibility for children ages 0-6 (A8803/S8303) and A8146/S7747 (Gonzalez-Rojas/Brouk).

- **Poverty Reduction:** When the federal government expanded the Child Tax Credit during the pandemic (2021), the child poverty rate fell to a historic low of 5.2%. When that expansion ended, the rate dramatically increased to 12.4%. Child tax credits work.



• Ed Trust–NY supports **S277A/A4022A (Gounardes/Hevesi) to combine and expand existing tax credits — specifically the Empire State Child Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) — into a Working Families Tax Credit.**

ADDITIONAL 2024 POLICY PRIORITIES

K-12 Education

- **Math Instruction and High-Quality Instructional Materials:**

2022 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 and school leaders of color improves outcomes for all students. Ed Trust–NY supports state investments and district initiatives that advance recruitment and retention of educators of color.



- **Course Access:** Across New York State, students of color and from low-income backgrounds are denied access to advanced coursework that would set them on a path to postsecondary success.

We support policies that create more access to these opportunities while providing information to families about the benefits of enrolling in advanced classes aligned to students' academic curiosity and postsecondary plans.



- **Graduation Measures:** Ed Trust–NY supports strong, equity-centered graduation measures that ensure all students are prepared for postsecondary success.

We look forward to working with state leaders as they begin to implement the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures to ensure they support high standards



and expectations for all students, particularly those that have been persistently underserved by our education system.

- **College Persistence and Completion:**

Too many recent New York high school graduates are entering college without the skills and support necessary to succeed. As a result, students often require more than the traditional two or four years to complete their degrees, resulting in increased debt and lower graduation rates. Ed Trust–NY supports policies that provide wraparound services to support postsecondary degree completion and eliminate the use of remedial coursework by replacing them with credit-bearing co-requisite courses.



- **P-20 Longitudinal Data System:**

New York is in dire need of a comprehensive governance structure and system that connects statewide data from birth through K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce. We support adoption of a P-20 cross-agency data governance system that would help leaders answer policy challenges, target resources, and better support families and students on their educational journey.





- **School Climate:** School climate and academic achievement work in tandem; when schools have positive, safe, and supportive climates they are better positioned to produce equitable academic outcomes for students.

We support policies that increase mental and health services in schools, holistically address chronic absenteeism, focus on restorative justice and other positive alternatives that keep students in the classroom, and mitigate disruption in learning through supportive structures that ensure there are no barriers that prohibit children from attending school and feeling welcomed once there.



Early Childhood Education

- **Home Visiting:** While Ed Trust–NY aims for the North Star of universally-offered home visiting, we must expand existing programs so that families who desire ongoing services have access to those services. We support an increase in appropriated funding for both ParentChild+ and the Nurse-Family Partnership program. 
- **Child Care Assistance Access:** Ed Trust–NY remains supportive of efforts to extend subsidies to children regardless of immigration status and looks forward to working with policymakers on this issue, which will allow more parents to work while providing stable, nurturing care. 
- **Help Me Grow (HMG):** Ed Trust–NY supports HMG, which provides comprehensive, family-centered, primary prevention services, and urges the State to make previously allocated funding available to programs so that they can expand access. 