



February 10, 2026

Testimony of Julia Konrad, Assistant Director for Education  
On behalf of New York City Independent Budget Office  
to the New York City Council Committee on Education

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Good morning, Chair Dinowitz and members of the Committee on Education. I am Julia Konrad, Assistant Director for the Education Team at the New York City Independent Budget Office (IBO). I am joined today by my colleagues, Alan Chen and Jason Wong, who are Urban Fellows with IBO this year. IBO is a nonpartisan, independent government agency mandated by the New York City Charter. IBO's mission is to enhance public understanding of New York City's budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at this oversight hearing on mayoral control. In my testimony, I will begin by describing IBO's authority under state education law and its connection to mayoral control. I will then discuss how IBO serves the public with the data access and resources provided by that state law. This testimony builds upon our ongoing work, including research led by Alan and Jason to explain how mayoral control works.

### **IBO Access to Data and Resources**

In 2009, as part of the amendments that extended mayoral control, the State Legislature authorized IBO to secure the information and data necessary to provide public reports on financial and educational matters within New York City. The State granted this authority in response to New Yorkers' call for greater accountability and transparency under mayoral control. To fulfill those responsibilities, the State Legislature mandated the City allocate not less than an additional 2.5% of the budget for the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to IBO for education research alone. This is on top of the 10% of OMB's budget guaranteed by City Charter Chapter 11 which established IBO. Because the additional funding allocation is written into state law and not subject to budget negotiations, IBO serves as an independent resource for New Yorkers year over year to gain information on the City's education budget and policies. With each renewal of mayoral control, the State has renewed IBO's role under New York State Education Law § 2590-U. For the past few years, IBO has sought to establish this authority as stand-alone legislation with Senate and Assembly members, distinct from the renewal of mayoral control.



## IBO's Impact

Because of this State-granted authority, IBO receives data from New York City Public Schools on students, teachers, and schools, as well as school and central administration budget data. In calendar year 2025, this access to data enabled IBO to publish 14 education reports and provide testimony on education topics at city and state hearings, including:

- [Education Indicators](#), an annual report on student demographics, student achievement, staffing and space at NYC schools;
- [Impact of Foundation Aid Proposals on New York City Revenue](#), an analysis of the funding impact of proposed changes to the State's Foundation Aid formula and [a follow-up analysis](#) of two additional proposals from the State legislature (IBO just [published estimates](#) for this year as well);
- [A Slow Start](#), a report to track the City's progress towards compliance with the State's class size law, in which IBO found that to achieve full compliance by September 2027, New York City will need to budget an additional \$702 million to hire approximately 6,900 teachers above what is currently budgeted in the City's financial plan;
- [What's In A Weight?](#), an assessment of changes to NYC's Fair Student Funding formula and its budgetary impact on schools, which included an explainer on the formula itself;
- [Utilization Up, Capacity Down](#), an examination of changes in enrollment and capacity for 3-K and pre-K programs in the NYC Department of Education early childhood program;

With the staffing and resources appropriated under State law, IBO engaged in extensive community outreach and engagement in 2025, including:

- Over a dozen interactive school budget workshops across all five boroughs, with events ranging from 30 to 200 participants, including presentations at four Community Education Councils and seven Community Boards;
- A public event co-hosted with Chalkbeat New York, to discuss NYC schools and funding, with roughly 100 attendees;
- A high school curriculum on the City's budget, taught this year for the second time at a NYCPS high school;



- Presentations at two academic conferences and two education seminar series, hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and by Columbia Teachers College.

Finally, IBO is proud to serve as a resource to parents, students, advocates, journalists, and elected officials alike. IBO takes requests from the public to explore specific research questions, and to lead budget trainings at community meetings (see our [website](#) to request either). For example, in 2025, at the request of Council Member Brewer, we estimated the cost of expanding the City's Schoolyards to Playgrounds program citywide. We are available to answer every New Yorker's questions, none too big and none too small.

As the City and State consider the next extension of mayoral control, IBO will continue to provide the public with additional transparency and understanding of the City's education budget and policies—as intended by state education law.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions



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