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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS, SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR DAVID BANKS
ANNOUNCE HISTORIC PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR CAREER
READINESS AND MODERN YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

Chancellor David C. Banks, Education Department: This is a really big day. I'm beyond excited. I'm trying to be cool, but we should all be tremendously excited about what's happening here today, right?

Audience member: Right.

Chancellor Banks: Before we even began, I had a chance to walk the room a little bit and touch base with so many friendly faces and people who I've known over the years. And we are in a place now to dramatically change our school system. And I, for one, could not be happier. We asked that essential question, "Why do we send our children to schools in the first place? What are we ultimately trying to achieve?" That's what this is all about today, and to make learning connected to the real world.

And so, we are here to discuss Student Pathways, which is about getting our students out into the professional world to explore their interests and invest in themselves, their futures, their families, and ultimately in their communities. As I mentioned, this work would not be possible without incredible and historic public-private partnerships. So please allow me a moment to thank Jamie Dimon, Julie Sweet, and the New York Jobs CEO Council who have stepped up to make this happen. Thank you.

My dear friend, Judy Diamond, who's played a key role in bringing this partnership together, and our partners at CareerWise New York. Thank you, Judy, for that. Bloomberg Philanthropies, who are committing \$8 million — that's just the start — to Student Pathways as an anchor philanthropic partner in this work.

I met with Mike Bloomberg months ago, as soon as I began my tenure as chancellor. He said, "If I were the mayor today, this would be the North Star. You've got to create the programs that are going to put people on the path to the 21st century economy. It's the most important thing that we could be doing." Thank you, Mike Bloomberg. Thank you, Bloomberg Philanthropies, for your investment in this effort.

Kathy Wylde and the Partnership for New York, for your efforts to convene the entire business community across New York City to build pathways to economic security. There is nobody who is as well-connected for the business community, and she is our partner in this work. I couldn't be happier. Kathy Wylde, thank you so very, very much. We also have to thank the Robin Hood and Pinkerton foundations for their support. Thank you to Robin Hood and Pinkerton. And we said earlier, a special thanks to our principals and students who are here today and all the educators, students, and families from across the city.

But of course, I personally have to thank Mayor Adams for not only his leadership for the entire city, but for his ongoing support around this initiative. Before he even became mayor, he talked about it on a daily basis. "How do we drive real opportunity, particularly for so many young people who've been left out of opportunity, young people who've never seen the inside of a place like JPMorgan Chase?" And so, this mayor has talked about this from the very beginning, and we would not be here today were it not for his leadership. Mr. Mayor, thank you so very, very much. We appreciate you.

Now, many of you are familiar with our four pillars for improving the New York City schools. Today's announcement is especially connected to two of those pillars, re-imagining the student experience and scaling what works. So to prepare our students for success in life beyond the classroom, we must recognize our young people's tremendous talent and skill. Our plan will help build the strong, diverse, economically vibrant future that we know that this city needs. But we can only do this together with New York City's employers and our post-secondary partners, including CUNY Chancellor Félix Matos Rodriguez, who we know as Felo. Felo, thank you so very much.

Every time I see him, I tell him he's the real chancellor. I'm just doing the best that I can. And at the same time, in the wake of this pandemic, we've seen enrollment fall, because too often schools aren't speaking to students' passions and purpose or connecting their learning to the real world. I cannot emphasize that enough. I've been in education for over 35 years and I would invite any of you — if you go and visit many of our high schools around the city — you can sit next to a young person and you can ask them, what are they engaged in? And they'll tell you, "I'm doing my work." Doing my work is code for, I'm just being compliant. I'm going through the motions. I'm doing what the teacher said. But they have no clue what it means. How does it connect to the real world?

And that's what this is all about here today. Career-connected learning, informed by and expanding on our quality CTE programs will ensure that New York City public school students graduate with real-world skills and experiences. It will give them a head start towards college and careers. It will also help them build their post-secondary plan and put them on the path to rewarding careers and long-term economic security.

So we're kicking off today with our Career Readiness and Modern Youth Apprenticeship, which will connect 3,000 of our students to apprenticeships and professional opportunities at major companies over the next three years. These students will have an opportunity to earn entry-level wages of up to \$25 an hour, getting real skills that will prepare them for good jobs right after high school and to go into college if they choose that path. As part of this effort, 15,000 9th and 10th graders across more than 50 schools will get career readiness skills.

And I'm particularly excited that our teachers will also actually get the opportunity to get out into the world of work and get experiences at these major companies. You see, it's very difficult for the teachers to reinforce what we are trying to do if they haven't had any level of exposure to the 21st century workplace themselves.

And so, these are a number of dots that we have to connect if we are really about providing true opportunity for our kids. We want the teachers to have a deeper understanding of this work so that they can teach our students these skills themselves.

What we are announcing today is just the first step. In the coming weeks, we'll share more details about additional pathways programs like Future Ready NYC, which will allow our students to receive college credits and industry credentials, access to internships, career-themed classes at schools initially focused on technology, healthcare, and education. Our young people have tremendous talents. What our children can achieve is unlimited if we help them discover what excites them and give them a sense of purpose.

And we are setting a bold goal — please hear me — that every student, not some, not most, that every student will graduate on the path to long-term economic security by the time they leave high school with the early college credits or credentials and real work experiences that will give them the head start that they need.

But we need to work together as we are doing today, private companies, higher education, philanthropy, and educators coming together on behalf of our students. So I'm so proud to join my partners who are here today on this stage with me. I'm excited to see what more we can do in collaboration with New York City's employers who we desperately need to step up into this space. If you've ever wondered what to do to try to help turn New York City around, and you are heading up any company in New York City, this is the place to lean in and this is the time to do it. Thank you so much, everybody.

(New York Jobs CEO Council Executive Director Kiersten Barnett, JPMorgan Chase Chairman and CEO Jamie Dimon, Accenture CEO Julie Sweet, Partnership for NYC Kathy Wylde, and Ryan Bernal Franco speak.)

Mayor Eric Adams: The technical aspects of this program, they have all been told. Let me give you the human aspect of it. Growing up in South Jamaica, Queens, I had a young friend who had a fire in his home and he came to live with my family for a month. He was an Italian young man moving to South Jamaica, Queens. Different city back then. And when his family was able to be placed, David Shiraski took me to sort of show his thanks for what we did. He took me, asked me did I want to go to Madison Square Garden to see the game. I said, "Will Frazier, Willis Reed, yes." I got there and it was not a basketball game, it was a hockey game. And I said, "David, what are you doing? Black people don't like hockey." And when I walked inside, I was afraid.

It was the first time in my life I was outside of the normal community of just all African Americans. And I sat there and the game started and I watched the excitement. And people who sat to the left and right of me was giving me high fives and we were laughing, we were enjoying the game. And I realized something. There was no sign at Madison Square Garden that stated Black people couldn't watch hockey. It was in my head. I built this imaginary wall of saying

what I couldn't do because of my ethnicity. This is a hockey moment for us. These young people have been betrayed for so long, and this city has produced broken babies that turned into broken children that went into a broken system and became broken adults. And you may say, "We're just doing our good deed." I know that, Judy. I know you're saying that this is just the right thing to do. It's more than that.

This is a moment that's going to unleash and unlock the potential of people who have been just betrayed for so long. We've normalized betrayal. We've normalized it. We knew every year, 65 percent of Black and brown children were never reaching proficiency. Every year. We knew it was happening to foster care children and we just kept on doing business. We had the audacity to ignore the industries that knew how to turn around companies. Had the audacity. How the hell do you have leaders of our city not sit down with our industry leaders and say, we have to do this together?

We betrayed you. We betrayed you every time you paid your tax dollars to produce a product and we gave you an inferior product. We betrayed the young people who did not get the services that they deserved. We've been a city, and honestly, a country of betrayal. We're stopping. We're going to create these partnerships because your baby deserve to live in this city. That a dyslexic child that did not get services, didn't pick up a gun and harm that baby. We deserve to ride a subway system where, because we did not tell that child his possibilities, that he or she believes they must have a criminal outcome, or that they may be permanently on public assistance or permanently feel that they have to be unemployed. This is what we are doing. We're in this together.

You are going to see this energy in the next three years and four months, of just believers. This is not a slogan. We're going to get stuff done. And yes, we're not going to succeed at everything, but we're going to try. We're going to try. There's a lot of people who are jaded. This beautiful announcement today, you may not even see it in the media. They're going to be distracted. What restaurant did Eric go to? (Laughter.) Forget about the amazing accumulation of government and business come together. So, we have to sing our own song. We have to ignore the noise. We have to send out emails among our corporate partners and others. We have to start telling our story above those who'd rather sell distrust. We're coming back, New York. We're coming back.

That's what 9/11 was about. It was not only to acknowledge those we lost on that day, but it was to acknowledge 9/12. We got up. Teachers taught. Retailers sold goods. Builders built. We're invincible, we're resilient. When New York turns it around, the country turns around. New York is America's city. This program is part of the pieces that we have been putting together for years. And I want to thank you, Kathy, for 15 years of being an unbelievable partner.

In the mid-nineties I sat down in my room and wrote in my diary and documented for all these years of how to fix this city. And I said back then, January 1st, 2022, I'm going to be the mayor of this city. And I'm here. I'm not going to waste one darn moment of it. Thank you, our corporate leaders. Thank you, our educators who are in this room. This dyslexic little boy is now the mayor of the city. I'm going back and finding those children who are abandoned and we're going to bring them forward together.

(Crosstalk.)

Question: Thank you. Mr. Mayor, in light of a program like this, I wanted to ask, members of your administration were testifying last week before the Council about a retainment crisis in the city government workforce where you have a vacancy rate as high as almost 9 percent. I'm wondering, is there any efforts similar to this where you're trying to get students into the private sector, are there any similar issues underway in the public sector?

Mayor Adams: Yes. And let's be clear, I know some people try to make the attempt that the employment crisis we are seeing in city government started on January 1st, 2022. We have a national employment crisis. National. This is impacting our entire country. That is why I am not just a chorus about returning to work. I wrote the song. It's time to get back to work.

You cannot hang out in the nightclub on Sunday, but you're afraid to come to work on Monday. Time to come back. I'm really happy to hear corporate leaders starting to say that. What we are doing and what Deputy Mayor Wright and Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer, what we are doing, we're looking at our employment pool. Kathy just said it. 300,000 jobs are out there. So we have to start connecting the dots with the job seekers and the jobs that are available. There are many rivers that feed that sea of employment. It includes apprenticeship programs. It includes making it easier for people to fill out a job. It includes going and doing non-traditional things.

People living in NYCHA are not on LinkedIn, but you have some great talent there. We're going to take our show on the ground, meet people where they are and feed them into the employment process on every level. That is our goal. So it's not one size fits all. This is one of the rivers that's going to feed the sea of employment and we are going to do it on our end at the same time.

Question: One thing that came up during the Council meeting, since we're on that topic now. Some Council members made the point that the lack of remote work, the lack of the possibility of working remotely, is actually harming the city's efforts to keep more people employed in the public sector. What do you make of that?

Mayor Adams: Well, I think that we are all at a very unique place, post-COVID. We were all traumatized and when you look at those Council members, I want them to answer the question: when I don't have the accountant in his office, who's going to go to that restaurant to make sure that waiter, that dishwasher is going to be there? Over 70 percent of our hotel occupancy comes from business travelers. If business travelers are not coming here, if they're not going to Broadway, if they're not patronizing the local bodega, the local restaurant, who's going to do that?

And then give them this final question. Do an ethnic and economic breakdown of who could work remotely and who can't. My train operator can't. My nurse can't. My school crossing guard can't. All of those lower income and overwhelmingly women of color, they can't sit home. If you are a school safety agent and remotely do the job. So when they show me that we can show the equality and the equity of those who are working from home and we don't divide the city between the haves and the have nots. We're saying to the highest income earners you can stay home and to the lower income earners you must go to work every day and stock our shelves, deliver our food, and make sure that your trains are driven. Not acceptable. It's not going to happen while I'm the mayor.

Question: I'm curious to understand some specifics about what the city and the schools are putting behind this. The businesses clearly have to make a commitment to bring students in to learn. What are the city and the school district doing to help those in apprenticeship?

Mayor Adams: The chancellor could say that, but I will tell you this. \$33 million is our investment on this. Chancellor, you want to talk about some of the things we're doing?

Chancellor Banks: I think that about says it all. We are being a real partner here. We have put the word out to our schools across the city. There's been a lot of efforts that have already gone in. Jade Grieve has been leading that work and how we're engaging our schools. The level of training even before the students would even show up at these apprenticeship sites is also critically important.

Many of our businesses are willing to take students, but they want students who will show up having some level of business protocol and understanding what it takes to be successful in this space. All of those are the kinds of things that are happening and continuing to be honed and developed even more. That's why we said this is just the beginning. The opening salvo, if you will, in this work around career connected learning.

Mayor Adams: Okay, we're going to do some off-topic. We're going to spare y'all this off-topic.

(Crosstalk)

Question: Hi, Mayor.

Mayor Adams: How are you, Emma?

Question: Good morning. My colleagues published an investigation in the New York Times over the weekend about Hasidic private schools. Were you concerned about the findings and when did you decide to restart the city investigation into the schools?

Mayor Adams: I'm not concerned about the findings of the article. The investigation, what they turn over to me, I'm going to use as how we move forward and what ways we move forward. So I'm not going to look at a story. I want a thorough investigation. I want a independent review and that's what the city has to do. We're going to look at that. And the chancellor has made it clear that we are going to make sure every child receives a quality education in this city.

Question: What about the reports about corporal punishment? You weren't concerned about the on the record examples?

Mayor Adams: I thought we were talking about the academic aspects of it.

Question: There's two pieces of it.

Mayor Adams: Right. Any form of corporal punishment, any form of any way that we give the appearance that children are being harmed in any way is not acceptable. Those reports should be reported to the necessary investigators. And those parents who feel their children were treated unfairly, they should report it. That is why we do thorough investigations to come to a full

outcome of that. If there are documented cases that were reported to investigators, they need to do an investigation to see if any child was treated unfairly.

Question: In timing, when did the investigation restart?

Mayor Adams: I'm sure the chancellor will tell you on the exact time that it restarted.

Question: (Inaudible) anxious about the water situation? What can you tell us?

Mayor Adams: Well, you can verbalize, or you can actualize. I went to Riis and I drank the water. It's one thing for me to say the water is fine when someone else is drinking it. I went to Riis, turned on the faucet, filled up the glass, and drank the entire glass. The water's fine. The tests are clear. We know there's years of distrust in NYCHA, and rightfully so. We have to rebuild that trust and you rebuild that trust by being on the ground and being very clear. We were successful in getting the Land Trust in NYCHA, what others were not able to do, but we were able to accomplish that. It's time to turn the corner on NYCHA, and that is my role and my job to do.

Question: Are you confident that there is no issue there?

Mayor Adams: I'm sorry?

Question: Are you confident that the situation is (inaudible)?

Mayor Adams: We went far beyond the norm. Over a hundred plus tests and examinations to see the water, test the water. We could have easily have taken a shortcut. And I said, "No, we want to make sure the quality of the water." The water is fine. And that is why we told NYCHA residents it is okay to drink and bathe in the water. DEP was on board, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene was on board. All of our agencies were on board. The water is fine.

Question: Just to follow up on that, mayor. How much of accountability are you putting on NYCHA? The federal monitor that's there, Bart Schwartz. Have you been speaking to him? I mean this is the reason he was put in place was to catch these type issues. Are you talking to them and talking to who was involved in this vendor issue and why did this go forward?

Mayor Adams: First of all, I'm glad you said that because we are paying a lot of money to the federal monitor. How did this happen? That's the real question. I question these whole roles of these federal monitors to be there. He's been there for all of these years. All that money that we spent, that money could have gone to many repairs. And so I'm going to do a deep dive. We were notified on Friday, they were notified on Monday. It's unacceptable. And so we know there's leadership that's about to take place in NYCHA and we are looking at exactly what happened here.

Question: Are you going to hold somebody accountable for this specific issue?

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: Mr. Mayor, over the last week, the governor signed the Class Size Reduction Bill. Now earlier, DOE had estimated that this would cost \$500 million just for K through 5 alone and then even more for the entirety of the system. Now, do you think that the city has been singled out as the only public school district? And why did the governor sign this bill? What did the discussions look like? And also how will this jive with the financial pledge that you discussed last week that the city is moving towards?

Mayor Adams: It's clear that the bill specifically singles out New York. And I say to those lawmakers, if it's something that everyone felt in, it should be statewide. But it's not. It's zeroing in on New York. I understand and respect the class size issue but I believe the way this was done was ill advised. Clearly we should use taxpayers' dollars to focus on equity — not equality, equity. There are certain school districts that need more. And what we are doing now, we're taking away the chancellor's ability to focus on where the problem is and the governor made the decision to sign it. There was enough lawmakers who could have easily overrode her veto if she wanted to. I don't know what her thoughts were in that area. But the law is the law and we're going to function in it. This is an unfunded mandate. And I'm hoping that those lawmakers, when they go back to Albany, they will look at how do we fund this dollar amount.

Question: Will this force the city to take money away from other areas, other agencies, other initiatives, and future budgets?

Mayor Adams: There's this belief that's really not a correct belief that the DOE is awash with cash. A lot of our money is tied up in pensions, in other costs. The dollar amount that's used for education, we're going to focus on that. And now we have to do a real analysis on if we will have to move programs. We're not sure. The chancellor's looking at that with his team. But when you look at the challenges we have in front of us, this decision was a major decision to make this unfunded mandate.

Question: On that same topic, obviously you and the governor have tried to present allyship and united front through these first nine months. How much damage does this do to your relationship with the governor that she signed this over your objections?

Mayor Adams: None. I mean, if one's relationship is based on one action, then you never had a relationship in the first place. The governor has been a great partner and I cannot thank her enough for the stuff we got done from childcare to NYCHA Land Trust to some of the changes she was able to push through around criminal justice to what we've done with Earned Income Tax Credit. If you have this whole litany of things that you were able to do together, if you disagree on parts of them and all of a sudden you are no longer allies, then you were never allies. The governor is an ally and I'm really happy to have a partnership. And it's great to be in a city where the governor likes the mayor and the mayor likes the governor. That's a good feeling. I like it.

Question: If I could just follow real quick on the NYCHA issue.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: One outstanding question is still why results were first found on a Monday and the city yourself weren't notified until the following Friday. What was up with those four days where nobody knew anything?

Mayor Adams: I agree.

Question: How come you weren't notified earlier than that? Was that on your staff?

Mayor Adams: No. The City Hall staff was notified on Friday. When they were notified, they immediately notified me. Now we're going to go back and find out what happened along the way. What we stated, and the team stated... I said, "Listen, right now, we're focusing on this crisis. We could review what happened, but we're going to focus on this crisis." So we brought in Office of Emergency Management. We brought in NYCHA. We brought in DEP. We brought in the Police Department. We mobilized all of our efforts on the crisis to get water to people, to get communication to the people. Now that the crisis is behind us, we can go and find out what went wrong. But I was not going to utilize my manpower and coordination on who did what, what did what. No, we focused on the crisis. And that is how you should move in operation. Deal with the crisis, and then deal with the review later.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: How are you?

Question: Good. I wanted to ask a follow up on Chris's question about the City Council hearing on the municipal workforce.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: One of the complaints from hiring managers is that they are restricted. They're being asked to only offer new hires the lowest salary of a posted salary range. And it was talked about at the hearing. The reason is because this was something that was negotiated with the unions in 2017, but it was never really enforced until the pandemic kind of made the city kind of tighten its belt. I'm wondering what you think about that rule? For the people that I've spoken to, it's really been an impediment for hiring what they feel is the best people for the job. Is there some way, do you think that the city should offer more exceptions for this type of rule? What do you think?

Mayor Adams: We had a meeting and sent out a survey and questionnaire to all of our commissioners and First Deputy Mayor Grillo was the team leader. I told her let's find out what's happening out there and what could we do to sort of improve the hiring and filling the vacancies. And we are currently analyzing that. They gave me the first version of what they discovered and we're going to continue to do so. But again, we have to be honest and clear here. This is a national problem. I'm not quite sure if we are really realizing what's happening in this country. When I speak to my corporate leaders, they're saying, "Eric, we're having a problem getting engineers, accountants, attorneys." This is a national problem that we are having and so New York City is part of the national — in the country. So...

Question: That's true. And in general, across the country, local governments have been trailing the private sector in hiring. So are you worried about the next generation of public servants?

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: These kids are going to work at JPMorgan.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: They're not going to consider working at the DEP or the NYPD.

Mayor Adams: Yes, real challenge. But keep in mind, we have a potential \$10 billion budget deficit. Now we can say let's just raise taxes through the roof and people say it's too expensive to live in the city and leave. Or we could be smart and use a financial scaffolding on how do we make the right decision? And that's what we're going to do. But let's not kid ourselves. It's easy to sit in the Council and just say, "Let's just spend, spend, spend." No. I must make smart financial decisions so our city can weather these turbulent times right now and we're going to do that. And they're difficult decisions. They're tough decisions. But that is why I was elected, to make the tough decisions. And I'm willing to make those tough decisions so our city can survive this period.

Question: Thank you —

Mayor Adams: That's a nice tattoo.

Question: I have a nice tattoo. Anyways, back on the NYCHA front.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: So the first time — according to the statement that was issued by the testing company — the first time that they reported to the city a positive test for arsenic was August 26th, which was an entire week before NYCHA residents were alerted. I understand you're saying now that these results are incorrect, but is that an acceptable timeline as you see it? That there was a positive test and then a whole week passed by before the public were alerted?

Mayor Adams: Chris, of my understanding, we are reviewing exactly what happened. As I stated, we focused on the crisis and now the team is looking at what happened. That was a game plan. That is how I operate. First deal with the crisis, then do a review to make sure problems don't happen again. Monday, when NYCHA... According to our preliminary review, NYCHA was notified on Monday, it was on their radar. We were notified on Friday. When we were notified, we immediately kicked in gear and made sure the residents were told, we put our water operation in place, and communicated on the ground. What happened in between that time, we are going to give you a complete analysis of that as we do our review.

Question: Where things are standing right now? I guess, I'm just wondering, your administration believes that the testing company is largely to blame. They accidentally introduced arsenic into the sample. But was there anything your administration, whether it's NYCHA, whether it's City Hall, whether it's any other element of city government. Was there anything that your administration could have done better here or differently?

Mayor Adams: When we do the review, I'll be able to answer that. I don't want to speculate, but we are going to be completely transparent on who dropped the ball, what could have been done better, and make sure that it is done better. I'm not at that place to be able to give you that answer because the focus was on fixing the problem. And Sunday, yesterday — or Saturday — when I went to NYCHA, we reached a point of the problem being fixed on what happened with the water.

Question: What's the latest with the Open Restaurant Program and figuring out a more permanent program? The task force (inaudible) about 65 dining sheds have been taken down so far.

Mayor Adams: Yes. The City Council, City Councilwoman Marjorie Velázquez, is leading that committee. And based on their recommendations, we're going to move forward. Whichever way the City Council moves, we're going to be in support of. As you know, I'm a supporter of the restaurant, open the restaurants. I think it's a great additive to our city and I believe it helped our economy and I think it continued to do so. We don't want them abandoned. We don't want the Wild, Wild West where it's just collecting rodents and trash. We want to really make sure the program is a great program. But we'll listen to what the City Council does and I have a lot of faith in what Councilwoman Velázquez is going to do. Thank you.

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