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**MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES ROADMAP TO REDUCE PUNITIVE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE  
AND MAKE SCHOOLS SAFER**

*With school crime down 29 percent in four years, Roadmap to expand de-escalation training, provide additional positive disciplinary supports for educators, clarify areas where school discipline can be better addressed through non-law enforcement tools*

*Launched in partnership with City Council, Roadmap aims to eliminate higher rates of suspensions, arrests and summonses among students of color and with disabilities*

**NEW YORK** –Mayor de Blasio today announced a roadmap to promote safe schools and end overly punitive school discipline policies, which disproportionately affect students of color and students with disabilities. Announced in partnership with Department of Education Chancellor Carmen Farina, Police Commissioner Bill Bratton, and the City Council, the roadmap includes additional training for police officers in how to de-escalate school conflicts, expanded access to behavioral health treatment options in high needs schools, and increased training and support for school personnel in non-punitive school disciplinary strategies. Since the 2011-2012 school year, school safety has improved in NYC public schools, with major crime down 25 percent and overall crime down 29 percent. Implementing this plan will advance the de Blasio administration's commitment to continue driving down crime in schools while also ensuring that all students feel safe and respected.

"When I was a public school parent, it was incredibly valuable to know that Dante and Chiara were safe and supported in class," said **Mayor de Blasio**. "Parents in all neighborhoods across New York City deserve the peace of mind to know that their children are empowered to learn and succeed in a safe, inclusive environment. This roadmap will ensure that schools across the city bring families, educators, safety professionals, and community leaders together to support one of New York City's most prized resources – our students."

"Whether through strengthening the Student Safety Act or by investing \$2.4 million to expand restorative justice programs to more schools in need, the City Council is committed to supporting City students and reforming punitive disciplinary practices in our schools," said **Speaker Mark-Viverito**. "The Roadmap initiative is a comprehensive approach to school safety that will build on the Council's efforts to eliminate disparities within our school system and I thank the de Blasio Administration and my Council colleagues for their partnership as we work together to support City students."

"Our schools should be safe havens for learning, especially for our students who are struggling most. This new roadmap makes important investments to ensure that our classrooms give children and educators the tools they need to succeed and thrive. I commend Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina for moving our schools forward with these lasting and constructive reforms," said **Public Advocate Letitia James**.

Students of color and students with disabilities continue to represent a disproportionate portion of those who are arrested or suspended in school, and a number of schools continue to have high rates of suspensions, arrests and in-school summonses. Research shows that when students are suspended or arrested in school, their chances of

being held back in school, dropping out and/or entering the juvenile justice system increase, even when controlling for individual student characteristics and school makeup. To ensure that schools remain safe and to avoid these negative outcomes, the de Blasio administration is enacting smarter policies that will promote safer schools and support teachers while reducing the need for exclusionary discipline and school-based arrests.

The administration's roadmap is based on recommendations developed by the Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline – a Task Force comprised of city leaders, City Council leaders, educators and community stakeholders that examined ways to make disciplinary practices in schools more equitable and effective.

The strategy announced includes both system-wide improvements to continue positive citywide trends, as well as concentrated resources to reduce disparities and better support high-need schools and students. Over the next year, the City will:

### **Expand De-Escalation Training**

The City will strengthen the relationships between educators, students, safety agents and police through expanded training, additional guidelines and technical assistance, and by clarifying roles of all adults in the school during crises.

- The NYPD is expanding de-escalation training for school safety agents and for the first time is offering Collaborative Problem Solving training for high-level officers and other police officers who may be called into a school during times of crises. Training will highlight best practices when policing in a school and will also emphasize de-escalation.
- Additional training will be given to school safety agents who are stationed at schools that serve students with more intensive special needs.
- A group of school safety agents, teachers and parent representatives have already been trained in restorative disciplinary practices in several high-need schools, with funding from the New York State Permanent Commission on Justice for Children. Restorative practices provide misbehaving students with more opportunities to reflect, improve emotional regulation and strengthen relationships. The NYPD and DOE will expand the number of restorative cross-trainings offered throughout the year.
- The NYPD and DOE will release an instructional guide for principals detailing best practices in integrating school safety agents into the school community and will offer technical assistance in schools with high-numbers of arrests. This instruction will include instructing educators and SSAs on the difference between law enforcement issues and disciplinary issues.
- Starting this year, schools will be required to complete their own Crisis De-escalation Plan to ensure staff members understand responsibilities and protocols in responding to extreme misbehavior.

### **Expand Restorative Techniques**

The City will expand disciplinary practices that incorporate restorative techniques – a form of discipline aimed at reducing future incidents through dialogue, self-reflection, and teaching impulse control. Restorative techniques can also be used in tandem with suspension.

- Through a partnership with the City Council, more than 20 schools will receive additional staffing to coordinate the implementation of restorative practices, as well as additional training in restorative practices. City Council is allocating \$2.4 million for restorative measures, and the DOE is allocating \$575,000 to the effort. Brooklyn Community Foundation is also partnering with the Leadership Team, allocating \$400,000 annually for a similar restorative justice initiative in 4 Brooklyn schools.
- NYPD is deploying a new warning card program on five campuses designed to provide an alternative positive form of disciplinary response to help discipline-challenged students before they become

entangled with the criminal justice system. NYPD and DOE personnel will be trained in how to use alternative forms of disciplinary response when warning cards are issued.

### **Expand Social-emotional Learning**

The City will expand resources that support students' social-emotional learning. Social-emotional learning emphasizes self-reflection and impulse control, and is particularly important for students who may have experienced trauma.

- A social-emotional learning advisory board will help find ways to increase social and emotional learning in schools and identify best practices. This will be supported with 63 additional guidance counselors and 50 additional substance abuse specialists this school year. The advisory board aims to incorporate social emotional learning, which includes emotion regulation and impulse control, into all classrooms by January 2016.
- Superintendents and DOE Borough Field Support Center staff will receive training in progressive disciplinary strategies and social emotional learning strategies.
- A \$2 million National Institute of Justice grant will support a two-year pilot of the Safe Public Spaces in Schools Program, to begin in Fall 2016. The program, designed to improve school culture via data-informed planning, professional development and ongoing coaching for staff, will be implemented in 12 high-need schools. This grant was won in partnership with the American Institutes for Research.
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### **Develop Uniform Metal Detector Protocol**

The city does not have a set of criteria for adding or removing metal detectors or assessing detector usage. Currently, there are 80 permanent scanning campuses throughout the City. Total crime in New York City public schools has declined 48 percent over the last decade.

- The NYPD will develop an assessment tool to evaluate where scanning may be necessary and scanners may be redeployed or reduced.
- The NYPD is increasing training for all school safety agents who work in scanning schools, and will release a scanning guide to detail best practices for agents in the scanning process.
- DOE is creating a guide for best practices in scanning, to be disseminated to principals and staff in November. The guide will detail new roles during scanning and emphasize the need for DOE staff to actively assist school safety personnel during scanning.

To ensure that the City's strategy is implemented quickly and effectively, the Department of Education hired Kenyatta Reid – former principal of Eagle Academy in Queens – as the Senior Director of School Culture and Climate.

Since the Mayor took office, schools are becoming safer and suspensions are declining. This corrects the spike in suspensions, arrests, and summonses in New York City schools that resulted from zero-tolerance policies in the 2000s.

- Between school years 2011-2012 and 2014-2015, school safety improved, with a 25 percent decline in major crime and a 29 percent decline in all crime in NYC public schools.
- Across the same time period, public schools reported nearly 36 percent fewer suspensions, 68 percent fewer arrests and 72 percent fewer summonses issued. This data accounts for arrests and summons made by the School Safety Division.
- The DOE released the 9th annual NYC School Survey which showed 92 percent of students reported feeling safe in their classrooms, up from 87 percent in 2014 and 85 percent of students reported feeling safe in their school building, up from 79 percent in 2014.

The Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline will release a second set of recommendations in the Spring of School Year 2016.

"As a grandmother, parent and lifelong educator, I know it is critical to have a safe, supportive and rigorous learning environment for students to achieve. We are providing more training to teachers, working closely with school safety officers, and giving social emotional support to students to ensure they are in the classroom where they can learn. I look forward to continuing this important work with educators, students, families and community members," said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña**.

"The significant crime reduction within our City's schools is an achievement we can all be proud of. The NYPD welcomes these training opportunities for its members, and the Department looks forward to improving its relationships with school faculty and students to ensure that New York City schools remain safe environments where students can learn and excel," said **Police Commissioner William J. Bratton**.

"Reducing suspensions and creating safe and respectful climates in our schools are vital steps toward giving every student the educational opportunity they deserve" said **Assembly Member Catherine Nolan, Chair of Committee on Education**. "That is why I have introduced Assembly bill A.8396, which addresses issues of appropriate discipline policies in our schools. Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina are a model for our state in strategically addressing this important issue and I look forward to working with them and the NYC task force on this important work."

"We must encourage a safe, nurturing environment for our public school students if they are to succeed academically," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm, Chair of the Committee on Education**. "I am pleased that the NYC Department of Education and the NYPD have begun to implement recommendations by the School Climate and Discipline Leadership Team which embrace a restorative justice approach to school discipline, and that the City Council has allocated resources to support this effort. I want to thank the Mayor and Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña for making this a priority."

"I applaud Mayor de Blasio, Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina, Police Commissioner Bill Bratton, and the Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline for recognizing that our children learn best in an environment that promotes prevention not detention. The programs announced today address many of the same issues that drove this Council to recently amend the Student Safety Act and I am thrilled to see the Administration fast-track disciplinary reform. Our students deserve schools that balance safety with dignity and I look forward to seeing the changes outlined in the Mayor's roadmap realized in classrooms and hallways across all New York City public schools," said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety**.

"As we saw this week, police street tactics have no place in school discipline, and can escalate a minor incident into a terrifying ordeal," said **NYCLU Executive Director Donna Lieberman**. "Today's reforms from the Mayor's Leadership Team represent concrete progress toward making city schools safe, nurturing and thriving. Public schools should be a place where discipline is an educational matter designed to teach children the skills and values that will help them succeed -- not a vehicle for discrimination and excess that widens the achievement gap and pushes vulnerable children out of school. The NYCLU will continue working with the Leadership Team to press for systemic reforms that ensure fairness, equity and a safe learning environment for all children."

"The Council of School Supervisors & Administrators supports professional development for all members of the city schools community as it relates to improving student deportment and school climate," said **CSA Executive Vice President Mark Cannizzaro**. "We also maintain that school principals are best positioned to make decisions regarding an effective response to student behavior."

“I commend the Mayor’s leadership in producing this roadmap for school discipline,” said **Judge Judith Kaye**. “These reforms will ensure that schools put students on a path to success, not to justice system involvement. We understand the magnitude of the problem – the data makes clear that an alarming proportion of Black students and students with special needs have experienced punitive disciplinary measures. It’s time for us to address this issue and improve outcomes for all students in New York City, and the Mayor’s roadmap provides a proactive plan that will improve school climate and keep kids in school and out of court.”

“The Mayor’s announcement is incredibly timely, in that recent news stories have thrown into sharp relief the urgent need for schools across the country to change the way they approach student discipline. The plans announced today are steps in the right direction, towards a school system where all students have a genuine opportunity to learn in an environment that is both safe and supportive,” said **Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children**.

“A safe and supportive learning environment is a prerequisite to academic progress and excellence in all schools. Implementing this roadmap is a critical step to providing educators, safety officers, and schools with the necessary resources to balance the needs of every student in their classrooms, maintain order and increase learning time. We are excited the de Blasio Administration and the City Council have shined a light on the importance of school climate and culture and hope they continue to solicit the feedback of teachers as implementation gets under way,” said **Evan Stone, co-founder and co-chief executive director of Educators for Excellence**.

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