



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES REFORMS TO RAISE ACHIEVEMENT ACROSS ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Raising the Bar: Get All 2nd Graders Reading at Grade Level, 2/3 of All Students Meeting Most Rigorous Standards for College-Readiness, Boost On-Time Graduation Rate to 80 percent*

*Universal Access to Challenging and Necessary College-Track Classes: Computer Science for All, AP Courses in Every School, All Students in Algebra by 9th Grade*

*Driving Innovation: District-Charter Learning Partnerships, “Single Shepherd” to Guide Families from Middle School to College in Struggling Districts*

**NEW YORK**—In a speech before hundreds of parents and educators, Mayor Bill de Blasio today laid out new reforms to achieve excellence and equity across all New York City public schools. The vision is a school system that begins earlier to give kids a solid foundation; makes rigorous and challenging courses the norm; ensures students master critical skills on time – like reading on level in 2nd grade and completing Algebra by 9th grade; and invests in a path to college for every New York City public school student.

Mayor de Blasio committed to providing every student and every school with critical tools to prepare students for success in college and careers: expanding Advanced Placement classes to every single school; providing every student with Computer Science classes in elementary, middle and high schools; and ensuring every student takes Algebra by the 9th grade. The Mayor also committed to new district-charter school learning partnerships and a College Access for All roadmap for every student. In two historically low-performing districts, the City is also launching a new “Single Shepherd” program to provide a dedicated counselor to every family to guide their child from middle school to college.

When fully implemented, the new programs will represent a \$186 million annual commitment by the City to raise student achievement. With these new supports, the City pledged to meet rigorous benchmarks by 2026: 80 percent of our students will graduate from high school on time, up from 68 percent today; two-thirds of them will be truly college-ready, based on the most rigorous new standards aligned with the Common Core; and all students will be reading in 2nd grade.

These commitments will build on critical programs already initiated by the administration, including Pre-K for All. For the first time this school year, the City is providing a free, full-day, high-quality pre-K seat for every 4-year-old in the city. Other reforms include the 130 new Community Schools, which provide wrap-around services to eliminate barriers to learning for disadvantaged students, including the 94 Renewal Schools, which also have an extra hour of instructional time each day, as well as doubling the number of middle-school after-school seats to serve 107,000 students.

“There is a tale of two cities in our schools, and we will not accept it. Each and every child in each and every classroom deserves a future that isn’t limited by the zip code of their birth,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Our schools must run on the twin engines of equity and excellence. These reforms take tools proven to drive success and make them the new standard for every student and every school. These are the building blocks that will ensure our students and this city can compete in a world that demands more education than at any time in our history.”

“Ensuring that every student has an equitable and excellent education is at the very core of my vision of public education,” said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña**. “Today, the Mayor laid out a bold plan to ensure our elementary, middle and high schoolers across every neighborhood have the critical support to achieve in rigorous academic courses – and we’ll ensure our educators have the proper training and resources to support our students. I’ve seen our schools evolve over the last 50 years, and I know these are the right ingredients for transformative change.”

The reforms announced in the Mayor’s speech include:

### **Computer Science for All:**

Every student will receive computer science education in elementary, middle, and high school within the next 10 years. Through this commitment, every student will learn the fundamentals of computer science, like coding, robotics and web design. This promotes critical skills like thinking creatively, working as a team, and interacting with technology, as well as technical skills that will power the 21st century economy. The Software Engineering Pilot (SEP) has brought computer science to 2,700 students in 18 middle and high schools across the city during the 2014-15 school year, and the number of computer science programs will be expanded significantly beginning in fall 2016.

- **Students reached:** By 2025, all 1.1 million students will receive a computer science education in elementary through high schools.
- **Cost:** \$81 million commitment over 10 years. Computer Science for All will be funded through a public-private partnership between the City of New York, CSNYC, Robin Hood Foundation and AOL Charitable Foundation who have committed to a 1:1 match of City funds.
- **Full implementation:** New classes starting in fall 2016 with full implementation in all grade levels by 2025.

“I applaud Mayor de Blasio’s bold and ambitious effort to reimagine what education can do in the digital era. It is critical that every student in NYC gets exposure to the concepts and fundamentals of computer science – the defining skill of the 21st century – in elementary, middle, and high school. And that’s what Computer Science For All is all about. Our nonprofit CSNYC will work actively to build out the private part of this historic public-private partnership, and my wife Joanne and I are thrilled to be founding supporters of this initiative,” said **Fred Wilson, Founder and Chairman of the New York City Foundation for Computer Science Education**.

“All of us at Robin Hood, New York City’s largest poverty fighting organization, are thrilled to partner with the Mayor, the Chancellor, Fred Wilson and others to make sure that every single public school student has access to a teacher trained in computer science. If computer science isn’t as essential as reading, writing and arithmetic, it’s real close. Robin Hood’s partnership with the City and brilliant leaders of the tech world will ensure that New York City’s public school students will succeed in the jobs of the future,” said **David Saltzman, Executive Director of the Robin Hood Foundation**.

“Historically, New York City and the rest of the United States have seen the cultural, economic and social benefits of investing in next-generation technologies and education. The contributions AOL Charitable Foundation and other partners have made alongside the Mayor’s Office will allow children of all backgrounds to share equally in the future of a software-driven economy and continue to bolster New

York's position as one of the leading technology cities in the world," said **Tim Armstrong, CEO and Chairman of AOL**.

### **Universal 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Literacy**

Today, just 30 percent of 3rd graders are proficient in reading. To boost literacy, every elementary school will receive support from a dedicated reading specialist, who will ensure all students are reading on grade level by the end of 2nd grade. English language learners and students with disabilities will receive additional supports to ensure they are on track with their peers. Schools will also ensure every family is a partner in the development of their child's reading skills. This work is critical, as students who are behind in reading by the end of third grade are more likely to struggle academically and less likely to graduate from high school – so we will start earlier to give our students more and targeted support. Within six years, at least two-thirds of students will be able to read with fluency by the end of second grade, with the target of 100 percent literacy by 2026. The City will use nationally recognized assessments to target additional support to kids who need it.

- **Students reached:** All 2nd graders – 76,000 students – have access to reading specialists as needed.
- **Cost:** \$75 million a year by FY2019 when fully phased in.
- **Full implementation:** Schools with students that need the most support will be prioritized with hiring beginning this spring, with approximately 700 reading specialists in place across all elementary schools by fall 2018.

### **AP for All**

Every high school student will have access to a range of Advanced Placement courses. Research shows that the rigor of Advanced Placement courses and exams better prepares them for college. AP for All will build on the success of the Department of Education's AP Expansion program, which has brought new AP courses to more than 70 schools since 2013. However, over 100 schools still lack AP courses, and low-income students and students of color take fewer AP courses than their peers: only 44 percent of black and Hispanic students who are prepared take AP courses compared to 66 percent of their white and Asian peers. The first new AP courses will be added as soon as fall 2016, along with prep courses at schools where students need to build AP readiness.

- **Students reached:** Students at all 400 high schools will have access to a full slate of at least five AP classes. Nearly 40,000 high-school students are currently enrolled in schools serving grades 9-12 that do not offer any AP courses today
- **Cost:** \$51 million a year by FY2022 when fully phased in
- **Full implementation:** New AP classes and prep classes starting in fall 2016, with 75 percent of students offered at least five AP classes by fall 2018 and implementation across all schools by fall 2021

### **Algebra for All**

Every student will complete Algebra no later than 9th grade, enabling them to reach more advanced math courses in high school, which will better prepare them for college and careers. Algebra is widely recognized as the "gatekeeper" to higher-level math and science courses. Today, nearly 60 percent of New York City middle schools offer Algebra coursework in 8th grade. By 2022, all students will have access to Algebra in 8th grade, and there will be academic supports in place earlier in middle school to build greater Algebra readiness by 8th grade. The first new Algebra classes and prep programs will start in fall 2016.

- **Students reached:** This initiative will primarily impact the over 15,000 8th grade students who do not have access to Algebra in their school today, and will expand access and readiness for all other 8th grade students not currently enrolled. Fewer than 30 percent of 8th grade students take the Algebra Regents today.

- **Cost:** \$19 million a year by FY2022 when fully phased in.
- **Full implementation:** 2021, with new Algebra classes and prep programs starting in fall 2016.

### College Access for All

Every student will have the resources and individually tailored supports at their high school to pursue a path to college. This will include schools providing students with opportunities to visit a college campus, get help completing applications, be paired with a college student who can serve as a mentor, or receive support in setting a strategy with their family on how they will afford college. Additionally, every middle school student will have the opportunity to visit a college campus, enabling earlier exposure to college for all our students. School planning will begin this spring, and the first new college access programs will launch in fall 2016.

- **Students reached:** Approximately 500,000 students – all students in grades 6-12.
- **Cost:**
  - College Visits for MS: \$5 million a year by FY2018 when fully phased in.
  - College Access for HS: \$15 million a year by FY2019 when fully phased in.
- **Full implementation:** 2018, with new programs starting in fall 2016.

### Single Shepherd

Every student in grades 6-12 in Districts 7 and 23 will be paired with a dedicated counselor who will support them through graduation and college enrollment. Students will be connected to a consistent source of academic, social, and emotional supports they need to succeed. This initiative is targeted at two districts with among the lowest high school graduation and college attainment rates in the city, and with evidence of success, will grow to support more high-needs students and communities. This program will start in the fall of 2016.

- **Students reached:** 16,100 students – all 11,300 students in District 7 in grades 6-12 and all 4,800 students in District 23 in grades 6-12.
- **Cost:** \$15 million a year by FY2017 when fully phased in.
- **Full implementation:** fall 2016

**District-Charter Learning Partnerships:** Up to 50 partnerships between district and charter schools through a new program to foster stronger relationships and sharing of best practices. Schools will be paired based on common practices and areas of strength, and provided resources to learn from each other. Initial pairings will include a focus on instruction for English language learners and math instruction, and these partnerships will be based on the model of DOE's Learning Partners Program.

- **Students reached:** All students at up to 50 district and charter schools across the city.
- **Cost:** \$5 million a year by FY2018 when fully phased in.
- **Full implementation:** 2017, with schools paired as early as this current school year.

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