



May 5, 2026

Dear Governor Kathy Hochul, Speaker Carl Heastie, Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator John C. Liu, Senator Shelley B. Mayer, and Assemblymember Michael Benedetto, and Members of the Legislature,

We are New York City education organizations that convene regularly to discuss shared priorities for students, families, and educators. We write to strongly urge the Legislature to extend mayoral control of New York City schools. In late April, we had the opportunity to meet with Chancellor Samuels as a group.

New York City's school system serves nearly one million students across more than 1,800 schools. Its students are the most culturally and linguistically diverse in the country and among the most economically vulnerable; nearly one in seven experienced homelessness last year. Without unified governance, decisions about resources, access, and quality vary across communities, and the families with the least power to navigate that variation pay the price. At this scale and complexity, unified leadership and clear accountability have made it possible to deliver results that a fragmented system could not:

- High school graduation rates have risen from 46.5% in 2005 to 83% today, with Black and Latino students making the most dramatic gains, both groups up more than 30 percentage points over that period.
- Under mayoral control, the city scaled Universal Pre-K from roughly 19,000 full-day seats to over 70,000 in two years, and 3k now reaches more than 43,000 children, bringing families into the system earlier than ever before and providing significant economic relief to the city's working families and reducing the childcare burden for tens of thousands of working families.
- NYC Reads replaced literacy curricula across all 32 districts simultaneously, a rollout that required the aligned governance and clear accountability that only mayoral control makes possible. In 2024-25, ELA proficiency rose 7.2 percentage points, and math proficiency under NYC Solves rose 3.5 percentage points, surpassing the statewide average in both subjects.
- Schools have more resources because the mayor, who controls the city budget, is accountable for outcomes. City funding has grown from roughly 44% to 60% of total education spending, enabling the most progressive student funding formula in the state, one that accounts for student need, concentrations of poverty, and students in temporary housing.
- A single, accountable system gives the Chancellor purchasing power that no superintendent or principal acting alone can match. That means better prices on curriculum and professional development, and real leverage to demand higher quality materials across all 32 districts simultaneously.

A fragmented governance structure cannot deliver these results or make these commitments at scale.

Our conversations with Chancellor Samuels have only reinforced our support for extending mayoral control. The Chancellor has experienced this system at every level, as a classroom teacher, a principal, a superintendent, and a parent. He deserves an opportunity to serve all of our students with that experience. He has signaled clear commitments: expanding NYC Reads to older students, integrating schools, strengthening family engagement, protecting the rights and safety of all our students, regardless of immigration status, and building on the instructional progress underway. The state's decision on mayoral control will shape whether he has the structure to follow through.

We also believe accountability alone is not enough. Too many families remain locked out of the decisions that affect their children because the structures were not built for them, the hours they work, the devices they use, or the languages they speak. We are eager to work with Chancellor Samuels and his team to make this system more democratic, inclusive, and transparent, and have shared concrete proposals with them to do so.

We urge you to extend mayoral control and allow the Mayor and Chancellor to lead. Thank you for your leadership.

In Partnership,

Educators for Excellence
Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children
Students First NY
Teaching Matters
Dyslexia Task Force for Public Schools
EdTrust–NY
Teach For America New York
The Jordan Family Foundation
ExpandedED Schools
Literacy Partners
The NYC Charter School Center
New Visions for Public Schools
Literacy in Community (LINC)