



PARENTS SUPPORTING PARENTS

NEW YORK

Testimony for the Joint Legislative Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget Proposal: Elementary and Secondary Education

January 29, 2026

On behalf of Parents Supporting Parents NY thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony about the Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget: Elementary and Secondary Education.

Parents Supporting Parents NY is a grassroots community organization dedicated to elevating parent and student voices, while advocating for the culturally responsive-sustaining education policies in New York State that many of us championed. This advocacy includes ensuring the full funding of our New York City Public Schools.

We urge Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature to **fully fund the Foundation Aid per pupil funding formula and implement long overdue changes**. These critical updates must include:

1. **Updating the formula's Regional Cost Index (RCI).**
2. **Adding a per-pupil weight for students experiencing homelessness and students in foster care.**

While we are pleased the FY 2027 Executive Budget proposes full funding of the *current* Foundation Aid formula, we are deeply concerned that it fails to make these necessary changes. Without them, **New York City students will continue to be shortchanged, missing out on hundreds of millions of dollars from Albany.**

Despite years of advocacy resulting in the full funding of the Foundation Aid formula in 2023, the formula itself is over 15 years old, uses outdated measures of student need, and does not

reflect current rising costs.

Last year's limited changes to the formula in the enacted FY 2026 budget—specifically the update to the poverty weight—**resulted in New York City schools receiving \$314 million less** than they would have otherwise. This poverty weight relies on inadequate federal guidelines and measures poverty uniformly across the State, ignoring significant regional cost differences. The FY 2027 Executive Budget continues this approach, meaning NYC students will again lose out on hundreds of millions of dollars intended for low-income students.

We call on the Legislature to address these shortcomings:**1. Update the Regional Cost Index (RCI)**

The RCI is intended to account for varying costs and wage needs statewide, but its values have not been updated since 2006, making them nearly two decades old. This failure to update the RCI, particularly amid the affordability crisis in NYC, prevents school districts from adequately paying for increased wages and growing costs. Last year, only Westchester County received an RCI update despite the needs of NYC families. The FY 2027 budget must update the formula's RCI, as proposed in S.8125/A.9049 (Senator Liu/Assembly Member Simon).**2. Add a Weight for Students Who Are Homeless and Students in Foster Care**

During the 2024-25 school year, over 154,000 NYC students experienced homelessness. These students, along with those in foster care, face major educational barriers, yet the formula provides no additional funding to meet their unique needs. Data shows over half of homeless NYC students—and two out of three students in shelter—were chronically absent. Furthermore, one in eight NYC students in shelter dropped out of high school, more than three times the dropout rate for students in permanent housing. The FY 2027 budget should add a per-pupil weight for these students, as proposed in S.8139/A.9048 (Senator Liu/Assembly Member Simon).

As an organization supporting foster children and those who have aged out of the system, we emphasize that public schools must be funded to uplift all families, including those impacted by family separation, without bias. In a city with over 150,000 homeless students last year, NYC schools cannot continue to be deprived of essential funding.

We stand with the [Coalition for Equitable Education Funding](#), over 120 organizations strong, in urging Governor Hochul and the NYS Legislature to fully fund the Foundation Aid formula with these key changes—updating the RCI and adding a per-pupil weight for homeless and foster care students—to ensure the formula truly meets the needs of today's students.

Parents Supporting Parents are also issuing a strong call to action, urging the Governor and state legislators to fully enforce the mandated New York State policy of **Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education (CRSE) across all New York City public schools**. This is not merely a request for a minor curriculum adjustment; it is a demand for the statewide implementation of an

evidence-based pedagogical method proven to be essential for improving student literacy outcomes.

The core principle of CRSE is that when children see themselves, their histories, and their cultures positively reflected in what they learn, it fundamentally changes their engagement and capacity to learn. This positive affirmation is a powerful catalyst, producing demonstrably better outcomes in our children's proficiency, not only in foundational reading skills but also in the higher-level comprehension necessary for academic success. This systemic change has been a central focus for education advocates and families for nearly a decade. Despite years of advocacy and the official adoption of the policy, its application across all public schools remains inconsistent, lacking the intentional, well-thought-out, and equitable implementation plan that our students deserve and require. We urge the legislature to dedicate specific funding and oversight to ensure CRSE is implemented with fidelity in every classroom.

Furthermore, as the legislature debates the future of school governance, we ask you to seriously consider a two-year extension of mayoral control rather than the proposed four-year extension. While mayoral control has been the governing structure for the past 25 years, it has often functioned as a system of absolute control with minimal accountability on the part of the Mayor for the performance of the system or the equitable allocation of resources. Crucially, this structure systematically strips families of any meaningful, influential input into how our public schools are operated. These are our children; we are the primary stakeholders, and we dedicate countless hours of labor—both emotional and logistical—to developing new and innovative ways to encourage, support, and navigate our children's educational paths. A shorter extension would provide a necessary check on power and create a more frequent opportunity for public discourse and accountability. Please take these fundamental concerns—both the imperative of CRSE enforcement and the urgency of greater family voice—into account as you deliberate and finalize this year's budget.

Thank you for your careful and immediate consideration of these critical issues. Should you require any further context or have questions regarding these recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact Tanesha Grant, Executive Director of Parents Supporting Parents NY, directly at tanesha1@pspnyinc.org.