

Testimony of TeachNY
Submitted by Evalyn Gleason, TeachNY Program Manager
Before the New York State Legislature
Joint Budget Hearing on Higher Education

New York’s educator preparation programs (EPPs)—across SUNY, CUNY, and independent institutions—sit at the front lines of a critical workforce challenge. The state cannot solve its teacher shortage without strengthening the pipeline that flows through its colleges and universities. Yet, enrollment in the state’s educator preparation programs has declined by 53% since 2011.

This committee funds these institutions and the deans who lead them. The deans and leaders of our education schools—from City College (CUNY) and Binghamton University (SUNY) to Syracuse University to St. John’s University—are telling us they need support to do their core work of recruiting and preparing the next generation of teachers. In a letter of support to the Governor, education deans from across the state have made their position clear. They affirmed that TeachNY “strengthens statewide recruitment efforts” and has “demonstrated strong early results at a relatively low cost.”¹ Since launching in 2024, TeachNY has engaged more than 83,000 prospective educators—65 percent of whom identify as people of color—and recruited nearly 1,800 new applicants to their educator preparation programs.

These results matter. Every dollar invested in TeachNY generates measurable growth in the educator pipeline, supporting NY’s colleges and universities in restoring enrollment. The deans are asking you to fund what is working.

Background on TeachNY. TEACH is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit, launched by the U.S. Department of Education in 2015, with a mission to solve the teacher shortage and diversify the profession. We are the nation’s leading expert on teacher recruitment, the largest recruiter of teachers, and the largest recruiter of teachers of color. Under the leadership of the New York State Education Department, and in close collaboration with SUNY, CUNY, and CICU, together, TeachNY was launched in 2024 with an annual operating budget of \$1.3 million, and it is now serving over 83,000 prospective educators.² The Governor’s Executive Budget allocates \$500,000—a level that would force the program to shut down entirely. We urge the Legislature to invest at least **\$10 million** in TeachNY in FY2027, so that it can continue and expand its impact to address New York’s teacher shortage crisis. TeachNY has established relationships with most EPPs in the state, becoming a relied-upon recruitment tool.

TeachNY Has Delivered Results. After one full program year, TeachNY has engaged over 83,000 prospective educators—65 percent of whom identify as people of color—and recruited an estimated 1,800 new applicants to teacher preparation programs. The program is on track to recruit more than 7,000 new applicants over the next three years.³ This diversity of TeachNY’s recruits is no accident—diversifying the profession is core to TeachNY’s mission.

The Crisis Is Urgent. New York will need more than 180,000 new teachers over the next decade, before accounting for workforce demands from the Governor’s \$4.5 billion universal child care investments and NYC’s 2022

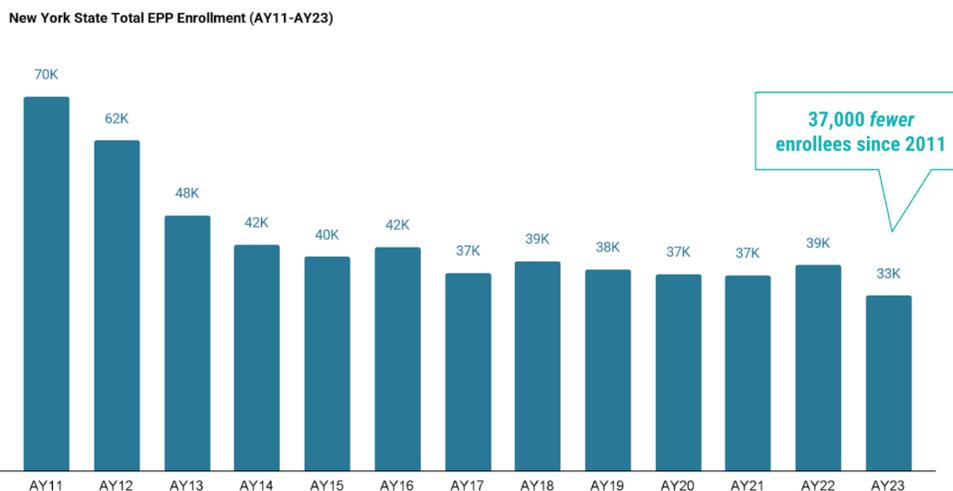
¹ Letter of Support to Governor Kathy Hochul (January 9, 2026). Signatories include deans from City College CUNY, Binghamton University (SUNY), Syracuse University, St. John’s University, Niagara University, Nazareth University, Utica University, Queens College (CUNY), Lehman College (CUNY), Bank Street Graduate School of Education, and the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities.

² TeachNY Year 1 preliminary results (2024–2025); TeachNY internal program data.

³ TeachNY Year 1 preliminary results (2024–2025).

class-size reduction law.⁴ ⁵ Yet, the number of New Yorkers enrolled in educator preparation programs has fallen 53% since 2011.⁶ New York City alone needs more than 16,000 new teachers by 2028 to replace retiring teachers and comply with the 2022 class-size reduction law.⁷ The state's official shortage areas for 2025–26 include Special Education, Career and Technical Education, Science, ELA, and Math in grades 7–12.⁸ Compounding the supply problem, more than 30% of pre-service teachers do not complete their training programs,⁹ often because unpaid student teaching creates an insurmountable financial barrier for candidates from low-income backgrounds. These are all problems TeachNY is designed to address.

Enrollment in educator prep programs has decreased by 53%



Source: NYSED Title II Reports

What \$10 Million Would Fund. A \$10 million investment would enable TeachNY to expand beyond its current system of supports for helping grow local talent into teachers, which are mostly online, to launch Pre-Teaching Society chapters on college campuses statewide, providing mentorship, community, and wrap-around supports – from initial interest in teaching to deciding they want to pursue it to getting into a training program to first job placement. It would also fund \$4,500 in student-teaching stipends for candidates from low-income backgrounds pursuing high-need subjects or placements in high-need districts. At this level, TeachNY would produce approximately 1,700 fully-certified new teachers per year at roughly \$6,000 per teacher—far below the \$12,000 to \$25,000 cost of teacher turnover. Most of the funding flows to universities for campus chapters and student teaching stipends—not to central program costs. In their January 2026 report on addressing the teacher shortage,

⁴ Office of the Governor, “Governor Hochul Announces Investments to Deliver Universal Child Care for New York Children Under Five” <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-investments-deliver-universal-child-care-new-york-children-under>.

⁵ New York City Independent Budget Office, “A Slow Start: Limited Progress in First Years Towards Class Size Compliance” (December 2025),

<https://www.ibo.nyc.gov/assets/ibo/downloads/pdf/education/2025/2025-december-a-slow-start-limited-progress-in-first-years-towards-class-size-compliance.pdf>.

⁶ New York State Education Department Title II Reports, <https://title2.ed.gov/>.

⁷ NYC Independent Budget Office, “A Slow Start: Limited Progress in First Years Towards Class Size Compliance” (December 2025).

<https://www.ibo.nyc.gov/assets/ibo/downloads/pdf/education/2025/2025-december-a-slow-start-limited-progress-in-first-years-towards-class-size-compliance.pdf>.

⁸ U.S. Department of Education Teacher Shortage Areas, <https://tsa.ed.gov/#/reports>.

⁹ TeachNY analysis of available NY educator preparation program reports finds that an average of 32% of pre-service teachers do not complete their training programs within 1.5 times the standard time frame.

NYSUT identified paid student teaching and teacher pipeline programs as top priorities—exactly what this investment would fund.¹⁰

Alignment with State Priorities. The Governor's landmark \$4.5 billion universal childcare initiative will require thousands of new early childhood educators—a workforce that cannot be built without a robust system for recruiting new educators. TeachNY is positioned to support this goal by recruiting candidates into early childhood certification pathways. The 2026 State of the State recognizes that New York needs as many as 180,000 new teachers over the next decade and calls for investment in “innovative teacher recruitment and preparation initiatives,” including enhancement of TeachNY to support more than 7,000 teacher recruits in the next three years.¹¹ TeachNY's proposed Pre-Teaching Society is built on the proven NYC Men Teach model and supports the State's 2022 NYC class size reduction law. The program also complements the Governor's proposed accelerated certification pathway for career changers and P-TEACH high school programs, meaning it would work in synergy with these programs to allow them to achieve greater results.

We urge the Legislature to invest at least \$10 million in TeachNY in the FY2027 budget. This would start to address the shortage, though a larger investment is needed to fully resolve it. New York's students deserve qualified teachers in every classroom, and TeachNY is the most cost-effective, proven vehicle for delivering them. We welcome the opportunity to provide any additional information that would be helpful to the Committee.

¹⁰ New York State United Teachers, "Forging a New Future: Recruitment and Certification" (January 2026), <https://www.nysut.org/news/2026/january/teacher-prep-report>.

¹¹ Governor Kathy Hochul, 2026 State of the State Book (2026), p. 107, <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/2026StateoftheStateBook.pdf>.