

Testimony of TeachNY
Submitted by Evalyn Gleason, TeachNY Program Manager
Before the New York State Legislature
Joint Budget Hearing on Labor and Workforce Development

New York faces a deepening teacher shortage that reflects a labor market failure—not insufficient talent, but structural barriers that prevent qualified candidates from entering a high-demand occupation. The state will need more than 180,000 new teachers over the next decade, before accounting for the expansion in the teaching workforce that are required by the Governor's \$4.5 billion universal childcare initiative and NYC's 2022 class-size reduction law.^{1 2} Yet, enrollment in NY's educator preparation programs that produce the state's teachers is half of what it was in 2011, falling far short of the urgent task at hand.

More than 30% of teachers-in-training (aka, preservice teachers) do not complete their educator preparation programs,³ often because the unpaid student teaching requirement creates an insurmountable financial barrier for candidates from low-income backgrounds. New York's unions understand this challenge. As NYSUT stated in its January 2026 report on teacher recruitment and certification, "The true barriers are financial, bureaucratic, and cultural."⁴

Investing in the teacher workforce is essential to New York's economic competitiveness. Teaching is the profession that prepares all other professions. Teachers prepare students for careers in high-demand fields and growing industries. New York's shortage areas—especially Science, Math, and Career and Technical Education—are critical to preparing students for the skilled workforce that employers need. Without sufficient teachers in these areas, New York cannot build the talent pipeline required for economic growth and opportunity. A workforce development strategy that does not invest in teacher recruitment and retention will fail to produce the educated workers that New York's employers require. Specifically, the push for high-tech industries and Jobs of the Future will fail without more STEM majors in our college system, which cannot happen with insufficient math and science teachers in K12 classrooms.

TeachNY provides that support through a comprehensive statewide system that combines marketing and recruitment with direct support: one-on-one coaching from mentor teachers, financial assistance to remove certification costs, inspirational events and programming, and a mobile-first system (i.e. Gen Z can access on their mobile phone) providing guidance through every step of the career entry process—from initial interest in teaching to getting into an educator preparation program. We urge the Legislature to invest \$10 million in TeachNY in FY2027 to expand this proven program by launching Pre-Teaching Society chapters on college campuses statewide and providing \$4,500 student-teaching stipends to candidates from low-income backgrounds—removing the financial barriers that prevent qualified candidates from entering a high-demand profession that faces dire shortages.

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.⁵ 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.

¹ Governor Kathy Hochul, 2026 State of the State Book (2026), <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/2026StateoftheStateBook.pdf>.

² 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>.

³ 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.

⁴ New York State United Teachers, "Forging a New Future: Recruitment and Certification" (January 2026), <https://www.nysut.org/news/2026/january/teacher-prep-report>.

⁵ TeachNY Year 1 preliminary results (2024–2025); TeachNY internal program data.

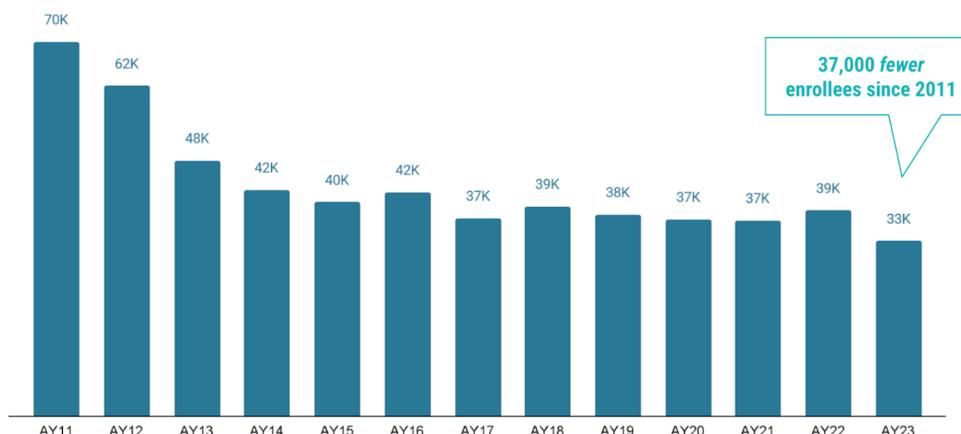
TeachNY Has Delivered Results. After one full program year, TeachNY has engaged over 83,000 prospective educators—65 percent of whom identify as people of color—and recruited an estimated 1,800 new applicants to teacher preparation programs. The program is on track to recruit more than 7,000 new applicants over the next three years.⁶ This diversity of TeachNY’s recruits is no accident—diversifying the profession is core to TeachNY’s mission.

The cost efficiency matters from a workforce development perspective. TeachNY recruits new applicants to educator preparation programs for under \$900 per applicant.⁷ At the minimum \$10 million investment level, TeachNY would produce approximately 1,700 *fully-certified, incremental new* teachers per year at roughly \$6,000 per teacher—far below the \$12,000 to \$25,000 cost of teacher turnover.⁸ This represents workforce efficiency at a scale many state workforce programs would envy.

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 class-size reduction law.⁹ ¹⁰ Yet, the number of New Yorkers enrolled in educator preparation programs has fallen 53% since 2011.¹¹ 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.¹² The state’s official shortage areas for 2025–26 include Special Education, Career and Technical Education, Science, ELA, and Math in grades 7–12.¹³ Compounding the supply problem, and as noted above, more than 30% of pre-service teachers do not complete their training programs.¹⁴ These are all problems TeachNY is designed to address.

Enrollment in educator prep programs has decreased by 53%

New York State Total EPP Enrollment (AY11–AY23)



Source: NYSED Title II Reports

⁶ TeachNY Year 1 preliminary results (2024–2025).

⁷ TeachNY Year 1 data (2024–2025).

⁸ Learning Policy Institute, "What's the Cost of Teacher Turnover?" (2024), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/2024-whats-cost-teacher-turnover>.

⁹ 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>.

¹⁰ 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>.

¹¹ New York State Education Department Title II Reports, <https://title2.ed.gov/>.

¹² 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>.

¹³ U.S. Department of Education Teacher Shortage Areas, <https://tsa.ed.gov/#/reports>.

¹⁴ 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.

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, NYSUT identified paid student teaching and teacher pipeline programs as top priorities—exactly what this investment would fund.¹⁵

Alignment with State Labor and Workforce Development Priorities. New York has already recognized teacher recruitment and preparation as part of its workforce development infrastructure. The state invests in the Empire State Teacher Residency as part of its workforce development strategy.¹⁶ TeachNY complements this existing commitment by addressing critical gaps in the pipeline. As mentioned earlier, New York cannot become a hub for high-tech industries and Jobs for the Future if it does not have a sufficient workforce that employers need - and that requires a great STEM talent pipeline, starting with K12 schools, leading to more STEM college majors, leading to a stronger New York Workforce.

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.¹⁷ 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 is an essential workforce development investment that removes structural labor barriers while building the talent pipeline New York's economy requires. TeachNY is the most cost-effective, proven vehicle for delivering the teachers that New York's students deserve and the skilled workforce that New York's employers need. We welcome the opportunity to provide any additional information that would be helpful to the Committee.

¹⁵ New York State United Teachers, "Forging a New Future: Recruitment and Certification" (January 2026), <https://www.nysut.org/news/2026/january/teacher-prep-report>.that

¹⁶ OSWD Annual Report 2025 (February 2025), https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/OSWD_Annual_Report_2025.pdf.

¹⁷ Governor Kathy Hochul, 2026 State of the State Book (2026), p. 107, <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/2026StateoftheStateBook.pdf>.