

CUNY Changes Lives.

But too many students don't have the resources and support they need to graduate.

CUNY is a national leader among colleges in moving students from poverty into the middle class, but it needs additional resources. New York has invested significant resources in the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and the new Excelsior Scholarship to ensure students have financial access to college.

But financial aid is only half the story. Long-term public disinvestment and failure to provide the funds needed to keep up with CUNY's growing enrollment have stretched the University's operating budget to the limit.

Restore stability to CUNY's operating budget.

The FY 2019 Executive Budget does not cover all mandatory cost increases, leaving fewer resources for academic instruction and student services. It leaves out future collective bargaining costs that should be considered a normal cost of operations. To start restoring CUNY's operating budget, we ask the Legislature for:

- **\$59 million to cover the "TAP Gap"** – By law CUNY must waive the difference between full-time tuition (currently \$6,530 for senior college students) and \$5,000 for students receiving the full TAP award. The initial goal of this policy was to shield low-income students from rising tuition costs. Over time, the "TAP Gap" has cut an ever-bigger hole in CUNY's operating budget, which will grow larger as tuition increases.
- **\$16 million to increase Base Aid by \$253 per FTE student** at New York public community colleges. This would raise the rate to \$3,000 per student and relieve pressure on the community colleges to raise tuition. We share NYSUT's concerns about proposals to "block grant" Base Aid.

Invest in student success.

We call on the Legislature to invest in a "CUNY Student Success Initiative" and provide \$150 million over three years, beginning with \$50 million this year. These funds would be used to:

Hire additional full-time faculty and fund the restructured faculty workload. Today CUNY has 24,000 *more* students than it had in 1974 and 3,900 *fewer* full-time faculty. Nothing is more important to student success than time with faculty who

can provide mentoring, research opportunities and academic support. CUNY took a critical step toward building a culture of greater student support this year by restructuring the full-time faculty workload to allow more time with individual students. The University should be funded to restore full-time faculty positions.

Pay adjunct faculty fairly. As enrollments grew and average per-student funding fell, CUNY increasingly relied on adjunct faculty to offer sufficient numbers of courses. Today, adjunct faculty are responsible for more than half of all CUNY undergraduate instruction, but they are paid unacceptably low wages. Low pay and poor working conditions undermine adjuncts' best efforts to provide individual attention and mentorship for CUNY students. Increasing adjunct pay to \$7000 per course is essential for student success.

Add academic advisors, invest in technology and IT staff, and expand needed student services. CUNY's student-to-advisor ratios range from 600:1 to as high as 1,500:1 at some colleges. CUNY students deserve more advisors and counselors to help them graduate on time.

Other critical priorities:

- The Legislature should allocate \$20 million to restore funding for critical programs cut in the Executive Budget, including SEEK, College Discovery and campus childcare centers, and to provide full funding to establish the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies.
- The Executive Budget includes \$43 million to cover fringe benefit increases, but does not fund \$90 million in other mandatory expenses. These include \$30 million for energy, building rentals and current contractual salary increments, and \$60 million for future collective bargaining costs.
- CUNY needs additional capital funding to maintain current facilities and to build capacity to accommodate its growing student body. CUNY added 40,000 students over the last decade.

We also call on the Legislature to:

- **Pass the NY Dream Act** to provide TAP financial aid and other scholarships to undocumented immigrant students.
- **Reform TAP to cover part-time students** so that they have access to adequate college financial aid.



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