

NEW DEAL FOR CUNY

FULLY FUNDED CUNY UNION CONTRACTS

FREE AND ROBUST CUNY COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Fund the New Deal for CUNY. New York State has made strides toward the New Deal for CUNY (S2146/A4425). The bill has been covered in outlets from *The New York Times* to the *New York Amsterdam News*, and a majority of the Democratic delegations in both chambers are sponsors. New Yorkers know the value of CUNY as an engine of economic growth for the state, and an engine of economic mobility for working families.¹ CUNY students —77% of whom are students of color, many who are immigrants and/or the first generation in their families to attend college — are determined to succeed. The New Deal for CUNY is more than a moral call for a free and fully funded public university system with enough faculty, advisors, and mental health counselors to ensure a high quality education. It is also a practical call for true economic development.

Fund union contracts. This year, 30,000 faculty and staff at CUNY, represented by the PSC, seek to renew their union contract with the University. Some 10,000 CUNY employees represented by District Council 37 also have an expired contract. Between 2010 and 2020, the mission of all New York State agencies, including CUNY, was undermined by the former Governor's practice of refusing to fund union contracts and other mandatory cost increases. It is time to return to the principled practice of fully funding contracts. Let's make New York a state that cares for its residents as both citizens and workers, not one or the other.

Free, fully funded community colleges. CUNY community colleges are the most vital path through which poor and working New Yorkers can attain higher education. During the pandemic, with a tight labor market, community colleges took a sharp hit to enrollment and hence to funding. But New York can step up and ensure that these institutions are accessible, vibrant, and prepared for the enrollment rebound that lies ahead. First-dollar, tuition-free community colleges will increase enrollment overnight, and proper funding will revitalize the campus experience to encourage student retention and graduation.

1. Comptroller Stringer Analysis: CUNY Graduates Earn Combined \$57 Billion Annually, Highlighting CUNY's Significant Contributions to Local and State Economies, March 12, 2021.

INVEST IN CUNY

TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEED: \$431 MILLION

TOTAL TUITION REPLACEMENT: \$284 MILLION

TOTAL CAPITAL NEED: \$983 MILLION

Full-time faculty. Increased support for faculty hiring to address racial inequity in access to full-time professors and improve CUNY's full-time faculty to student ratio, consistent with the New Deal for CUNY (Senior Colleges: \$178.8 million, 1876 faculty hires; Community Colleges \$21.1 million, 225 hires).

Funding for mandatory cost increases. Fund the basic year-over-year cost increases required to operate CUNY, including negotiated employee salaries and fringe benefits. (\$82.7 million)

Enhanced academic advisement and counseling services, community college ASAP for all. (\$112.2 million)

- Funding to hire academic advisors and mental health counselors
- Funding to support college access by subsidizing students' commute to campus

Graduate education support. (\$24.5 million; 50 faculty hires)

- Align fellowships and stipends with peer institutions and NYC's cost of living
- Increase support for doctoral programs to better connect students with CUNY research centers and graduates with career opportunities in industry and the academy
- Expand and diversify ranks of research-focused faculty who mentor graduate students

Community college funding floor. Create a stable funding floor and increase base aid to \$3250 per student (\$11.7 million)

No tuition hikes. Free community college. Reject proposed tuition hikes. Eliminate tuition and fees at all CUNY community colleges (\$284 million).

Capital Budget: Half of CUNY's 300 buildings are more than 50 years old. Only 8% of CUNY buildings are in a state of good repair. And the University has a deferred maintenance backlog valued at \$4.3 billion. CUNY is requesting \$983 million for capital upgrades and repairs. The legislature should meet CUNY's full FY 2024 capital request and commit to a five-year plan that will enable the administration to fulfill its obligation to provide safe, sustainable facilities.