

# STATE OF NEW YORK

1727

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

January 14, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. REYES, ROSENTHAL, EPSTEIN, ANDERSON, DAVILA, FORREST, GALLAGHER, WEPRIN, MITAYNES, TAYLOR, SIMON, SEPTIMO, SAYEGH, JACKSON, GONZALEZ-ROJAS, CRUZ, R. CARROLL, DINOWITZ, SEAWRIGHT, BICHOTTE HERMELYN, LAVINE, CLARK, KIM, McDONOUGH, MAMDANI, FALL, TAPIA, COLTON, COOK, DE LOS SANTOS, PAULIN, RAGA, BORES, ALVAREZ, JACOBSON, LEE, SIMONE, SHIMSKY, SHRESTHA, WALKER -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law and the state finance law, in relation to enacting The New Deal for CUNY

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This enacts "The New Deal for CUNY".  
2 § 2. Legislative intent. The Legislature hereby recognizes the need  
3 for The New Deal for CUNY to ensure that the commitment the Legislature  
4 articulated in establishing the city university of New York is extended  
5 to present and future generations. The 1961 legislation recognized that  
6 the creation of a city university as a single unified system was "justi-  
7 fied" by the special needs of a multi-racial urban constituency and the  
8 "vital importance" of creating opportunities for disadvantaged New York-  
9 ers. Those needs have only grown in the half-century since the Legisla-  
10 ture's action. Yet CUNY's ability to fulfill them has diminished as  
11 enrollment has skyrocketed and investment has failed to keep pace. The  
12 New Deal for CUNY reimagines CUNY as the vital urban university it must  
13 be if it is to serve the people of New York. It enhances CUNY's historic  
14 role as a leader in educational justice and economic transformation.  
15 This legislation restores free tuition, ensures adequate faculty staff-  
16 ing, and aligns student support with nationally recommended standards.  
17 In doing so, The New Deal for CUNY restores New York to national leader-  
18 ship in public higher education and removes the barriers to student  
19 success that have prevented thousands of CUNY students from realizing  
20 the full potential of a college degree. The New Deal for CUNY gradually

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 increases the ratio of students to full-time faculty at CUNY to  
2 nationally recommended levels, with a special emphasis on racial and  
3 ethnic diversity in hiring. It also replaces the system of underpayment  
4 for contingent faculty with a dignified labor system that provides  
5 students with the support they urgently need. CUNY students, perhaps  
6 more than any other college population in the country, bear stresses  
7 that make it extraordinarily difficult to stay in college, sometimes  
8 even to survive. The New Deal for CUNY addresses the urgent need for  
9 student support by gradually escalating the hiring of mental health and  
10 other counselors to bring CUNY into line with national standards. The  
11 New Deal for CUNY mandates that all tuition and student fees for  
12 in-state undergraduate students within specified time frames for  
13 completion of degree be eliminated, and that the revenue to the colleges  
14 that would otherwise derive from tuition and fees be replaced annually  
15 by federal, state, and city funds.

16 § 3. Subdivision A of section 6221 of the education law is amended by  
17 adding a new paragraph 4-b to read as follows:

18 4-b. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, rule or regulation to  
19 the contrary, subject to amounts made available by appropriation,  
20 commencing in the two thousand twenty-seven--two thousand twenty-eight  
21 academic year, the city university shall be entitled to annually receive  
22 one hundred percent reimbursement for the annual cost of tuition and  
23 student fees for each matriculated undergraduate student at a city  
24 university senior college and community college who is enrolled in  
25 credit-bearing academic coursework and is on track to graduate. The  
26 state comptroller shall establish a separate fund for such monies to be  
27 distributed to the city university of New York. The city university  
28 shall receive an amount equal to the full cost of in-state undergraduate  
29 tuition and student fees for each qualifying, matriculated student who  
30 successfully completes credit-bearing academic coursework and is on  
31 track to graduate. The full cost of tuition shall not include any addi-  
32 tional funds the student may receive from any other New York state or  
33 federal grant, award, or scholarship program. The deposit of these funds  
34 shall be utilized as first dollar awards to the students at the city  
35 university. Any student not successfully completing credit-bearing  
36 academic coursework in a semester shall still be eligible to receive all  
37 other grants, awards, and scholarships for which they qualify but shall  
38 not be eligible for the tuition and student fee reimbursement described  
39 herein. Students shall be eligible to receive a one semester exemption  
40 from the requirement to complete credit-bearing academic coursework for  
41 such tuition reimbursement as promulgated by the higher education  
42 services corporation. Such exemption shall not preclude any student from  
43 exercising their right to appeal pursuant to higher education services  
44 corporation policy. The state comptroller shall deposit such monies with  
45 the city university no later than thirty days after the start of the  
46 semester.

47 § 4. Section 6206 of the education law is amended by adding three new  
48 subdivisions 24, 25 and 26 to read as follows:

49 24. Each community college and senior college of the city university  
50 of New York shall maintain, at a minimum, a ratio of one clinical, non-  
51 student mental health staff member per one thousand students. Within two  
52 years of the effective date of this subdivision, each community and  
53 senior college shall establish, and require a meeting of, a board of  
54 advisors having expertise in the area of clinical mental health  
55 services. The advisory boards shall, using current data, update and  
56 modify, as necessary, such ratios based on actual ratios in this state

1 and any new information related to appropriate benchmarks for clini-  
2 cian-to-student ratios. Data collected by the advisory boards may be  
3 used as a means to increase the number of mental health staff members.  
4 In no event shall the ratio fall below one clinical, non-student mental  
5 health staff member per one thousand students. Following the initial  
6 meeting, advisory boards shall meet once every five years. This subdivi-  
7 sion shall not be funded by student tuition or fees created on or after  
8 the effective date of this subdivision. Community colleges and senior  
9 colleges in the city university of New York may seek federal funding or  
10 private grants, if available, to further expand and support the  
11 provisions of this subdivision. Any faculty and staff hired through the  
12 assistance of federal funding or private grants pursuant to this subdivi-  
13 vision shall be treated and classified as full-time public employees and  
14 covered under any collectively bargained contracts in their respective  
15 bargaining units. The city university shall report annually, on July  
16 first, to the chair of the senate finance committee, the chair of the  
17 assembly ways and means committee, the chair of the senate higher educa-  
18 tion committee, and the chair of the assembly higher education committee  
19 on the following criteria:

20 a. the ratio of clinical and non-student mental health staff employed  
21 and what that number equates to per student;

22 b. the number of full-time mental health staff, and number of part-  
23 time mental health staff per campus, including those who may not possess  
24 the title mental health staff but are primarily employed to perform and  
25 carry out the duties typically assigned to, and function as, mental  
26 health staff; and

27 c. the mean and median number of students receiving services per  
28 campus in the two thousand twenty-seven--two thousand twenty-eight  
29 academic year and in the academic year in which the report is prepared  
30 from full-time mental health staff, and from part-time academic advi-  
31 sors.

32 25. Commencing in the two thousand twenty-seven--two thousand twenty-  
33 eight academic year each community college and senior college of the  
34 city university of New York shall maintain a minimum academic staffing  
35 ratio of forty-five full-time faculty members per one thousand full-time  
36 equivalent students. Commencing in the two thousand twenty-eight--two  
37 thousand twenty-nine academic year each community college and senior  
38 college of the city university of New York shall maintain a minimum  
39 academic staffing ratio of fifty full-time faculty members per one thou-  
40 sand full-time equivalent students. Commencing in the two thousand  
41 twenty-nine--two thousand thirty academic year each community college  
42 and senior college of the city university of New York shall maintain a  
43 minimum academic staffing ratio of fifty-five full-time faculty members  
44 per one thousand full-time equivalent students. Commencing in the two  
45 thousand thirty--two thousand thirty-one academic year each community  
46 college and senior college of the city university of New York shall  
47 maintain a minimum academic staffing ratio of sixty full-time faculty  
48 members per one thousand full-time equivalent students. Commencing in  
49 the two thousand thirty-one--two thousand thirty-two academic year and  
50 each year thereafter, each community college and senior college of the  
51 city university of New York shall maintain a minimum academic staffing  
52 ratio of sixty-five full-time faculty members per one thousand full-time  
53 equivalent students. This subdivision shall not be funded by student  
54 fees created on or after the effective date of this subdivision. Any  
55 faculty or staff hired through the assistance of federal funding or  
56 private grants pursuant to this subdivision shall be treated and classi-

1 fied as full-time public employees and covered under any collectively  
2 bargained contracts in their respective bargaining units. The city  
3 university shall utilize national searches to ensure recruitment of  
4 diverse faculty from underrepresented racial, ethnic, and gender groups,  
5 and prioritize the creation of full-time faculty positions for adjunct  
6 faculty currently employed by the university in order to meet the mini-  
7 imum academic staffing ratios described herein. The city university shall  
8 report annually, on July first, to the chair of the senate finance  
9 committee, the chair of the assembly ways and means committee, the chair  
10 of the senate higher education committee, and the chair of the assembly  
11 higher education committee. The report shall include, but not be limited  
12 to, the following criteria:

13 a. data that indicates whether the city university is in compliance  
14 with the mandatory minimum academic staffing ratios established pursuant  
15 to this subdivision;

16 b. the number by campus, in the two thousand twenty-seven--two thou-  
17 sand twenty-eight academic year and in the academic year in which the  
18 report is prepared, of each full-time tenured faculty, full-time  
19 tenure-track faculty, full-time non-tenure track faculty, including  
20 those who may not have a faculty or academic job title but perform  
21 instructional duties and number of faculty lines and unfilled faculty  
22 positions;

23 c. the mean and median class size by campus in the two thousand twen-  
24 ty-seven--two thousand twenty-eight academic year and in the academic  
25 year in which the report is prepared, for full-time tenured faculty,  
26 full-time tenure-track faculty, and full-time non-tenure track faculty  
27 and instructional staff;

28 d. the mean and median class size by level for remedial one hundred  
29 level introductory courses, and two hundred level mid-level courses and  
30 above for completion of an associate degree and baccalaureate degree in  
31 the two thousand twenty-seven--two thousand twenty-eight academic year  
32 and in the academic year in which the report is prepared;

33 e. the number of part-time non-tenure track faculty in the two thou-  
34 sand twenty-seven--two thousand twenty-eight academic year and in the  
35 academic year in which the report is prepared, including those who may  
36 not have a faculty or academic job title but perform instructional  
37 duties, by campus; and

38 f. the mean and median class size by campus for part-time non-tenure  
39 track faculty and instructional staff in the two thousand twenty-seven-  
40 -two thousand twenty-eight academic year and in the academic year in  
41 which the report is prepared.

42 26. Commencing in the two thousand twenty-seven--two thousand twenty-  
43 eight academic year each community college and senior college of the  
44 city university of New York shall maintain, at a minimum, a ratio of one  
45 academic advisor per six hundred full-time equivalent students. Commenc-  
46 ing in the two thousand twenty-eight--two thousand twenty-nine academic  
47 year, the minimum staffing ratio for academic advisors at each community  
48 college and senior college of the city university of New York shall be  
49 one academic advisor per every four hundred full-time equivalent  
50 students. Commencing in the two thousand twenty-nine--two thousand thir-  
51 ty academic year, the minimum staffing ratio for academic advisors at  
52 each community college and senior college of the city university of New  
53 York shall be one academic advisor for every three hundred full-time  
54 equivalent students. Commencing in the two thousand thirty--two thousand  
55 thirty-one academic year, and every year thereafter, the minimum staff-  
56 ing ratio for academic advisors at each community college and senior

1 college of the city university of New York shall be one academic advisor  
2 for every two hundred fifty students. This subdivision shall not be  
3 funded by student tuition or fees created on or after its effective  
4 date. Community colleges and senior colleges in the city university of  
5 New York may seek federal funding or private grants, if available, to  
6 further expand and support the provisions of this subdivision. Any  
7 faculty and staff hired through the assistance of federal funding or  
8 private grants pursuant to this subdivision shall be treated and classi-  
9 fied as full-time public employees and covered under any collectively  
10 bargained contracts in their respective bargaining units. The city  
11 university shall report annually on July first to the chair of the  
12 senate finance committee, the chair of the assembly ways and means  
13 committee, the chair of the senate higher education committee, and the  
14 chair of the assembly higher education committee. The report shall  
15 include, but not be limited to, the following criteria:

16 a. whether the city university is in compliance with the mandatory  
17 minimum academic advisor staffing ratios established pursuant to this  
18 subdivision;

19 b. the number of full-time academic advisors per campus, and number of  
20 part-time academic advisors, including those who may not possess the  
21 title academic advisor but are primarily employed to perform and carry  
22 out the duties typically assigned to, and function as, an academic advi-  
23 sor; and

24 c. the mean and median number of student advisees, per full-time and  
25 part-time academic advisor per campus in the two thousand twenty-seven-  
26 -two thousand twenty-eight academic year and in the academic year in  
27 which the report is prepared.

28 § 5. The second undesignated paragraph of section 6220 of the educa-  
29 tion law is amended by adding a new subparagraph 16-a to read as  
30 follows:

31 16-a. Part-time and adjunct faculty shall receive wages and compen-  
32 sation equal to those in the lecturer title of this section based on  
33 comparable hours, duties and level of responsibility assigned to those  
34 in the title of lecturer. Commensurate increases in wages and compen-  
35 sation for adjunct faculty with professoriate titles shall correlate to  
36 the appropriate professor, associate professor, and assistant professor  
37 titles as bargained.

38 § 6. Section 22-c of the state finance law is amended by adding a new  
39 subdivision 7 to read as follows:

40 7. For the fiscal year beginning on April first, two thousand twenty-  
41 six and every fifth fiscal year thereafter, the governor shall submit to  
42 the legislature as part of the annual executive budget, five-year capi-  
43 tal plans for the state university of New York state operated campuses  
44 and city university of New York senior colleges. Such plans shall  
45 provide for the annual appropriation of capital funds to cover one  
46 hundred percent of the annual critical maintenance needs identified by  
47 each university system, and may include funds for new infrastructure or  
48 other major capital initiatives, provided that such funding for new  
49 infrastructure or other major capital initiatives shall not count  
50 towards meeting the overall critical maintenance requirement. In the  
51 event that such plan is unable to fund one hundred percent of the crit-  
52 ical maintenance needs due to the limitation imposed by article five-B  
53 of this chapter, the director of the budget shall develop five-year  
54 capital plans whereby the implementation of each capital plan would  
55 annually reduce the overall facility condition index for each university  
56 system. For the purposes of this subdivision, "facility condition index"

1 shall mean an industry benchmark that measures the ratio of deferred  
2 maintenance dollars to replacement dollars for the purposes of analyzing  
3 the effect of investing in facility improvements. The apportionment of  
4 capital appropriations to each state-operated campus or senior college  
5 shall be based on a methodology to be developed by the director of the  
6 budget, in consultation with the state university of New York and the  
7 city university of New York.

8 § 7. This act shall take effect immediately.