

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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