

Borough Budget Consultations FY2026
Department of Education & School Construction Authority

Draft Questions

[After boilerplate]

1. INVESTMENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The announcements relating to the Adopted FY2025 Budget emphasized \$293MM additional funding for Early Childhood Education (“ECE”).

With respect to the various amounts funded as reflected in the announcements, please provide the following information.

- Replacement of Federal Stimulus Funding (reported at \$92MM):
 - Will this funding be sufficient to continue the 3-K and Pre-K programming currently in place? Will it fund any additional programs or services? Will any current programs or services be eliminated due to the loss of Federal Stimulus Funding notwithstanding this funding?

- Outreach (reported at \$5MM):
 - One of the problems identified in the announcement was the dual issue of families experiencing waiting lists or unavailability of 3-K and Pre-K seats in some locations, while vacant seats at other locations go unused.
 - Will this funding be directed at that dual problem?
 - How will the funding be used?
 - Does this funding need to be baselined for future years? Is the issue expected to recur?
 - Is this funding sufficient to meet the need identified?

- Extended Day/Extended Year (\$40MM):
 - The announcements projected that this funding would enable the conversion of 4,000 partial day/partial year seats to full-day/full-year seats
 - DOE’s responses to our FY2025 questions indicated that in FY 2024 1,800 seats would be similarly transitioned (at a cost of \$15MM)
 - Are the FY2025 seats an addition to the FY 2024 seats, or cumulative of those seats?
 - How many of the projected 1,800 seats targeted in FY 2024 were converted?
 - Were all of those converted seats actually filled and used?
 - Are the number of seats converted in FY2024 plus FY2025 sufficient to meet demand? Is additional funding needed to serve all demand?

- Preschool Special Needs (\$55MM):
 - Please summarize the services included in the use of these funds.
 - Will diagnosis or evaluations be included in this funding?
 - Is this funding baselined? Will it be needed in FY2026 and beyond?

2. SCHOOLS AND STUDENT SUPPORT

The FY2025 Budget announcement also highlighted an additional \$400.2MM in funding for schools and student supports.

With respect to these funding allocations, please respond to the following questions.

- Hold Harmless (\$75MM):
 - Please summarize the needs to be met by this funding.
 - Were there unusual conditions in FY2024 or expected FY2025 that occasioned this allocation?
 - Shelter Evictions
 - Language access
 - social workers
 - Is this need expected to recur in FY2026?
- Learning to Work (\$31MM):
 - Please summarize whether this involves new programming, expansion of participation in this program to additional students due to increased demand, or some other impetus.
 - Will these funds be needed in FY2026 and beyond? Should they be baselined?
- Arts Education (Certified Art Teachers @ \$41MM plus Arts Education Funding @\$4MM):
 - In DoE’s helpful responses to the FY2025 Budget Consultations, DoE identified School Allocation Memos (SAMs) for arts programming, including SAMs for \$25MM and \$5MM respectively.
 - Are the allocations mentioned in the FY2025 announcement similar in kind to those from FY2024?
 - In the responses to the FY2025 Budget Consultation, DoE indicated that many of the resources through which arts education is funded reside at the school-based budget level – is that still the case? Does the FY2025 allocation referenced above contribute to that funding scheme or represent a new initiative?
 - Are the amounts included in this funding allocation needed in FY2026 and future years?
- School-Based Social Workers and School Psychologists (\$74MM):
 - In DoE’s responses to the FY2025 Budget Consultation Questions, DoE noted that 500 Social Workers were hired using Federal Stimulus funding that has now expired, and that additional funding of approximately \$80MM would be needed to provide every school with these staff supports.
 - Please indicate whether the current funding is expected to be sufficient to provide this resource to every school. If not, please indicate what additional funding would be required to do so in FY2026 and future years?
 - Please identify by District schools that currently lack Social Workers.
 - Is this funding baselined (either in amount or in numbers of positions supported) so that it would not be a topic of negotiation in FY2026 and future years?

2.5 SCHOOL NURSES

3. UPDATE ON THE CHANCELLOR’S FOUR PILLARS

In DoE’s responses to the Questions posed in the FY2025 Borough Budget Consultation, DoE highlighted aspects of the Chancellor’s Four Pillars.

Please provide updates on the following programs and topics raised in that explanation, with a view toward how those programs relate to the FY2025 and expected FY2026 Budget.

- Career Pathways Initiative – please advise about current and future year funding, and whether additional funding is needed to meet demand.
- NYC Reads – Please assess the impact of the program (as well as of the Advisory Council on Literacy mentioned in that explanation), plans for expansion or changes to it, and whether the funding in FY2025 is adequate to meet those goals. Please also advise as to whether additional funding will be necessary in FY2026 and beyond to meet those goals, and whether those funds (or a portion thereof) have been baselined so as not to be a topic for future negotiation.
- School Safety Agents as part of the Safety and Wellness initiatives.
 - Please update on the net additional hiring of School Safety Agents.
 - Please summarize any current or projected issues with attracting and retaining SSAs, including salary and benefit levels, turnover, and working conditions.
 - Please advise what if any additional funding is needed to fully staff the schools safety initiatives such as the Safer Access program.
- Engaging with Families – Please summarize the current initiatives for engaging families, the funding needed for programs or initiatives introduced or expanded in FY2024, and any funding needs not addressed for FY2025 or projected for FY2026.

4. INTERVENTIONS FOR SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS CHALLENGED BY DYSLEXIA AND OTHER STRUGGLING READERS

To the extent not included in responses to NYC Reads and other initiatives noted above, please update on the funding provided for initiatives to address the needs of students struggling with dyslexia and other reading challenges. Please summarize with distinctions between funding for programs or initiatives at the Central or District level from those at the School-Based level. Has the funding level changed from the amount reflected in DoE’s responses to the Questions for Budget Consultations for FY2025?

5. SUPPORTS FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS

In DoE’s responses to the Questions for Budget Consultations relating to FY2025 with respect to at-risk student supports (Item 5), the funding for the identified programs and needs (including Mental Health Continuum, Community Schools, Immigrant Family Engagement, and Shelter-Based Coordinators) reflected significant cuts forecast for FY 2024. The explanation for those reductions or eliminations were either that the program funding was on a one-time basis or were based on Federal Stimulus funding that was set to expire.

Please update on the funding for these programs, indicating

- whether the programs have been renewed,
- whether additional or alternative funding has been secured, and if so from what source(s),
- whether the current FY2025 and projected FY2026 funding is sufficient to meet the needs addressed by these programs and initiatives.
- *To what extent are supports for students in migrant/immigrant Shelters different than traditional DHS Shelters? Is funding equivalent in both groups of Shelters or temporary housing? Does the type and level of support vary based on the type of temporary housing (e.g. hotels vs. traditional*

shelters)? What supports and services are offered in Shelters other than traditional DHS shelters? How do various agencies work with DoE to support students in these situations? What funding is needed to ensure that all students in all types of temporary housing receive equivalent supports?

6. FAIR STUDENT FUNDING

In DoE's responses to the questions for the FY 2025 Budget Consultations (Item 7), DoE provided a chart reflecting allocation changes in the Fair Student Funding formula and allocations with projections to FY2023 and FY 2024 budgets.

Please provide the counterpart projections for FY 2025 and FY 2026.

7. CLASS SIZE REDUCTION

State Legislation enacted in 2022 included provisions calling for reductions in class sizes at various grade levels.

Please provide a summary of the following:

- Please indicate the programs currently in place and those planned for FY 2025 and FY 2026 which are intended to help meet the class size targets included in the State Legislation.
- Please identify the amount and source of funding for each initiative for FY 2025 and projected FY 2026.
- Please estimate the additional funding needed in order for NYC to be fully in compliance with the class size target included in the 2022 State Law.
- Please describe or summarize the approach to meeting the targets included in the law.

8. SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS IN SHELTERS AND TEMPORARY HOUSING

In DoE's responses to this topic in the FY2025 Budget Consultations (Item 10), DoE outlined the then-current uses of funding including McKinney-Vento funding streams to support students in shelters and temporary housing.

The City has reported that the population of students in shelters and temporary housing has increased significantly in recent years due to a variety of societal factors.

Please update the funding allocations and uses available for programs that support students in temporary housing and shelters, including Project Open Arms and other Students in Temporary Housing initiatives.

Please also estimate the additional funds needed to meet the needs of all students in this category.

Please also assess for FY2025 and projected FY2026 whether it would be useful to baseline some or all of the current funding to meet recurring needs, or whether the number of students and types of needs to be met vary too much for such an analysis.

9. CAPACITY AND ENROLLMENT - TRENDS

Please update on the total enrollment in FY2024, and projected for FY 2025 and FY 2026.

Has DoE/SCA's methodology or process of evaluating future enrollment changed, been revised, or been adapted or expanded in any way since the responses to the Budget Consultation Questions for FY 2025 (during September 2023)? If so, please describe the changes, the reasons for such changes, and the net effect of implementing such changes.

10. CAPACITY

Please update on any changes to school capacity projects since SCA's responses to the Budget Consultation Questions for FY 2025 (during September 2023)?

In particular, please advise:

- Whether any projects for creating new or refurbishing existing capacity in the current capital plan have been cut, reduced in scope or eliminated, and if so, whether or to what extent the availability of funding was a contributing factor in the decision to do so, and if so, please provide details of each such project..
- Whether potential future projects for increasing, updating or replacing school capacity have been delayed, rejected or suspended due to the projected availability of funding, and if so, please provide details of each such project.

11. RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR COMMUNITY BOARDS' STATEMENTS OF DISTRICT NEEDS AND BUDGET PRIORITIES

For what expense or capital needs would DoE and/or SCA recommend or encourage Community Boards to advocate – whether new initiatives, retaining existing programs or services, or expanding current programs or initiatives?

In the responses to the Questions for Borough Budget Consultations for FY 2025 (Item 16), DoE and SCA highlighted the expiration of Federal Stimulus funding and the need to replace that funding in order to sustain programs and initiatives going forward.

- To what extent have expiring Federal Stimulus funding amounts been replaced or alternatives secured?
 - Please identify the sources of funding used to replace Federal Stimulus funds in FY 2025 and projected 2026?
 - Are the sources of replacement or alternative funding for the expired Federal Stimulus funds sustainable or will those sources of funding themselves potentially expire or be subject to uncertain future budget decisions?
 - What uses of Federal Stimulus funding in previous years' budgets is not expected to be replaced or for which alternative sources of funding located? To which programs or initiatives do those expiring funds correspond?