YOUNG 🔽 INVINCIBLES

#SecureOurFutureNYC:

Increasing Opportunities for New York City's Disconnected Youth

Mayor's Fellows in Policy and Advocacy: Izzy Dempsey, Leilanie Guerrero, Jenny Gil-Rojas, Quadena Kennedy, Rickie Martell, Dainma Martinez, Enrique Ortiz, Leey Thorpe

Executive Summary

Young adulthood is a critical time for educational and career exploration, and connecting young people with opportunities to identify their passions, values, and professional goals. Yet, for thousands of young New Yorkers, these opportunities can be few and far between. Even before COVID-19, one out of every eight young people in New York (ages 16 to 24) were neither in school nor working.¹ In fact, in 2019, 129,000 (13%) 16-24 year-olds across New York City were out of school and out of work.² As a result of this pandemic, that number is projected to have more than doubled, with <u>259,000 (27%) to 324,000 (34%)</u> 16-24 year-olds now out of school and out of work . More than three-quarters of out-of-school, out-of-work (OSOW) youth are Black and Latino. Being disconnected from school and work can have serious impacts on young people in both the short- and long-term, possibly delaying opportunities to earn a living wage and attain a better quality of life. And while New York City was making some gains in reconnecting these young people with educational and career opportunities, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout put thousands of young people at risk of losing work, leaving school, and becoming disconnected.

As part of Young Invincibles' inaugural Mayor's Fellowship in Policy and Advocacy program, our fellows developed *2021 By Us For Us*, a peer survey designed to learn about the barriers other young New Yorkers faced when trying to complete high school. This policy brief presents the findings of the survey, which largely focuses on dropout prevention. We also examine existing programs serving OSOW young people. Finally, our fellows provide recommendations on improving these programs and preventing high school dropouts in New York City.

Some of our key findings from the survey include:

- Meeting young people's essential needs are key to high school completion
- Lack of guidance and mental health support contribute to students leaving high school without a diploma
- Changes in school support structures, in-school and out-of-school programming, and curriculum are needed
 to keep students connected
- Existing City and school programs aren't communicated effectively to young New Yorkers and their caretakers
- More career exploration opportunities are needed for young New Yorkers

Some of our key recommendations include:

- Invest in mental health services that meet the needs of New York City's young people
- Improve communication between schools, students, and caretakers to prevent dropping out
- Expand curriculum to include more relevant and inclusive coursework for young New Yorkers
- Increase in-school and after-school programming in working-class schools, and develop partnerships with community-based organizations to support students and families
- Improve dropout interventions process and approach
- Expand programming to support students with caregiving and financial responsibilities
- Make system-wide investments in recruiting and retaining a more diverse school staff
- Introduce alternatives to the Regents Exams

As New Yorkers emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, and prepare to elect new City leadership across the five boroughs, we hope this policy brief provides a roadmap to policymakers on how to truly support the next generation of young New Yorkers through high school and beyond.

About the Mayor's Fellows in Policy and Advocacy

The Mayor's Fellowship in Policy and Advocacy program is a leadership development program in policy and advocacy for NYC youth that are out of school and out of work. The program is offered as a paid internship through DYCD's Advance & Earn Program. Students meet for twelve hours of training and three hours of independent or group work each week over a seventeen-week period to gain skills in advocacy and research as they learn more about workforce development and education issues. Throughout the program, Fellows were supported by mentors, former Young Advocates, who helped provide guidance and support on their projects.

Over the four month duration of the program, the Mayor's Fellows reflected on their experiences in high school and workforce development programs leading to the draft of this policy brief, along with the public forum and call to action. They participated in a variety of skills and strategy sessions to think through how they would advocate for increased support for high school completion and opportunities for workforce and career development. They also learned how to use communications and their own individual stories to amplify their policy priorities. The fellows provided research, developed the survey, and synthesized the results for this report. We're incredibly proud of how much they learned and are excited to be able to share their perspectives here.

About the Mayor's Fellows in Policy and Advocacy

Methodology

Young Invincibles Mayor's Fellows developed and conducted the digital survey, *2021 By Us For Us*, in order to hear the experiences of disconnected youth across New York City and the issues that they face in trying to attain a high school credential and enter into a career pathway. The survey addressed several issues, including:

- Participants' experience in high school
- The role of mental health in school completion
- The challenges young people face when balancing school and meeting their essential needs like food and

housing

- Communication between schools, City services, and students and families
- Future plans and participants' sense of community

To conduct outreach, YI shared the survey with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Advance and Earn providers. Participants received a \$10 UberEats gift card as an incentive for completing the survey. In total, 92 young people from across all five boroughs participated in the survey, sharing the barriers to high school completion and what would have helped them persist through high school.

Demographics

98% of survey participants were between the ages of 16-25. Over half of respondents represented the Bronx and Brooklyn followed by Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. Almost two-thirds left school before completing 12th grade. 50% of respondents were unemployed and looking for a job, while 30% of respondents were part-time employees and 12% were working full-time. Nearly 80% of the respondents don't have a high school equivalency diploma (HSE) and are working towards receiving an HSE.

Survey Findings

Meeting Young People's Essential Needs Are Key to School Completion

The difficulty of meeting essential needs like groceries, rent, and medical costs is one of the great problems among young people in New York. Often students rely on the social assistance programs to provide for the basic necessities. As noted above, 44% of the respondents said that they or their families are enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, while 21% of respondents reported being enrolled in a housing assistance program. These programs are beneficial to students, especially in low-income communities, as it provides them with necessary resources. To give an idea, 62% of our respondents indicated that they have the necessary resources to meet their basic needs, but unfortunately 38% think otherwise. This reflects the importance of expanding these programs so they can be accessible to more people.



In which of the following social assistance programs, if any, are you or your family enrolled? (Select all that apply.) $\;$

Lack of Guidance and Mental Health Support Contribute to Students Leaving High School Without a Diploma

Nearly half of the respondents felt that the lack of guidance and support at school contributed to them leaving high school before receiving their diploma. Mental health issues were also a major contributor to leaving high school, with more than a third of respondents (35%) indicating their mental health impacted their decision to drop out. School and family environments also impacted students' decisions to stay in school (32% and 25%, respectively).



Students Reflect on the Guidance, Support, and Curriculum That Would Have Helped Them Stay In School

Our survey also asked participants to reflect on their experience in high school. Again, participants emphasized the importance of in-school support and guidance, with 60% wishing they had more of these supports and services. This was followed by 39% of participants who wished they had devoted more time to their studies, while 35% wanted greater access to opportunities in and outside school.



If you wish you could change something about your high school experience, what would it be? (select any and all that apply)

Survey participants were asked to select up to three factors that would have helped them remain in school. A majority of respondents, 66%, stated that more guidance and support from their counselors and school staff would have helped them remain in school. 44% stated that general stability at home would have helped them remain in school and 27% felt that financial stability would have helped them. Additionally, 30% stated that more academic support would have been helpful in their high school persistence while 29% also stated that mental health supports would have contributed to staying in school.





When asked to provide suggestions for school curriculum, 50% of respondents reported that general life skills courses should be added to their high school curriculum, such as financial literacy courses and cooking classes. 34% of respondents would like to have opportunities to get credit for paid internships, while 23% would like to see more trade skills classes in high school.

Existing City and School Programs Aren't Communicated Effectively to Young New Yorkers

Respondents stated that there has been a lack of communication from the city and school about the programs offered for youth. 58% think that their school did not do a good job communicating with their parents and caregivers. One of the most common recommendations from survey participants was improving outreach and communication about existing city and school supports and programming. Respondents also suggested connecting students with information about available programs at earlier ages. Over one-third of students, 38% remember getting information from their school about existing programs in high school, compared with 18% getting the information in middle school. This includes informing students who are struggling about the High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. When asked when they learned that the HSE was an option for completing high school, 45% of survey participants said that they learned about it after leaving high school while just a quarter of respondents learned about it during high school.

More Career Exploration Opportunities are Needed

Access to career opportunities and other resources helps students succeed as 42% of participants said, their

mental health was positively impacted when they obtained a job or had resources available to work towards their career development. While many students have a career goal they are working towards, they often lack the guidance and support to continue towards their goals. When asked how the city can help in achieving that goal, one respondent said: "Have young people try out every job career to find their match and find our true passion. Point us to the direction of opportunities and also give financial guidance and lastly give us someone who genuinely cares." Many other respondents felt that having more internship and career exploration opportunities, financial assistance such as affordable secondary education, and assistance in getting their HSE will significantly help them in achieving their career goals.

Need for More Life Skills Classes and Career and Technical Education Offerings

Building life skills into coursework, and also offering a life skills class would significantly benefit students, especially in their independent adulthood. In fact, 50% of respondents stated that life skills, such as sewing, cooking, and financial literacy should be added to the high school curriculum. If courses cannot be offered, providing workshops on these vital skills should be considered. In addition, the curriculum should be updated to provide "real world" application of coursework learning.

This cohort also felt that students would benefit from more career and technical education programs such as woodshop and welding. In fact, according to the survey, 23% of respondents felt that trade skills classes should be offered as part of the high school curriculum. Not every school offers career and technical education (CTE) programming at the moment. And although there are specific CTE high schools in New York City, students need to know about them earlier in their school career in order to enroll.

Barriers to High School Completion

Lack of Physical and Mental Health Resources and Support

Addressing mental health and overall health needs of students increases the likelihood that they will stay in school and graduate. 46% of survey respondents said that lack of school guidance and support contributed to them leaving school before completing their diploma. Based on our research, bullying, trauma, depression, and anxiety were common experiences that significantly impacted academic performance and attendance. In addition, physical health issues also contributed to high school persistence. Similarly, students with learning, physical, and intellectual disabilities experienced a lack of appropriate and adequate accommodations.

66 I feel if I had the mental health resources that I do now when I was a child, things would have been different.

- Youth from the Bronx

Lack of counselors or support from counselors was a common occurrence. In addition, many felt that their counselors were not equipped to address their specific needs and specialized care, like substance use.

According to the New York State (NYS) Education Department (SED) and the NYS Office of Mental Health, partnerships with community-based providers and schools are crucial for the success of students. These partnerships, often offered through community schools, have been identified as an effective means of addressing the mental health needs of students and improving the learning environment, resulting in improved academic outcomes. Increasing students' access to clinic and community mental health services help facilitate early identification of mental health needs and disorders, while also improving coordination of services between school staff, clinic, and community-based partners. Increasing students' and families' access to mental health services in schools can also help reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health treatment.

New York City's Department of Education (NYC DOE)'s counseling program includes the development of counseling plans as well as providing information and training to counselors about prevention, interventions, system supports and activities to meet the needs of all students. Schools now have School Counseling Advisory Councils made up of staff and parents that develop, review, and revise counseling plans that are reviewed and approved by the Borough/Citywide Office. Executive Superintendents then meet twice a year with their School Counseling Advisory Counseling Advisory Councils to monitor and evaluate plans.

In response to COVID-19, the City is expanding mental health services offered in NYC DOE schools. Mental health supports will be integrated into the Summer Rising program, all schools will participate in social-emotional screening, and over 600 social workers, psychologists, and family support workers will be hired. In addition, mental health resources and training will be made available to parents through DOE's Parent University and to early childhood educators. In addition, the School Mental Health Program is working with our community providers to offer telehealth services. The city also launched the Let's Talk NYC program, a self-guided online training that prepares all high school staff to become mental health allies.

I feel that schools should provide more of an individualized plan, the opportunity to sit down with a counselor and talk about what you need. If people knew you were struggling, they could connect you to resources like The Door sooner, to get your needs met. It's a shame that it's a curative program and not a preventative program.

- Youth from the Bronx

Family caregiving or financial responsibilities as obstacles to high school completion

Survey participants indicated that family caregiving responsibilities, including being a young parent, are often not accommodated by schools and programs. That lack of flexibility can have a significant impact on a student's academic journey. In our survey *2021 For Us By Us*, 15% of respondents stated that family caregiving responsibility contributed to them leaving school before receiving their diploma while 18% responded that parenthood was a major factor. When asked what would have helped them remain in school, the respondents

identified that not having caregiving responsibilities, stability at home and more flexible scheduling allowing them to work and care for their families would have positively contributed to their retention in school.

Students addressing their families' financial responsibilities are often left out because there are no programs that support these students. In our survey, 18% of respondents identified that their need to work and financially support themselves or family led to them leaving school before receiving their diploma. 27% of respondents stated that financial stability at home would have helped them remain in school. In fact, in our recent survey, 44% of respondents stated that having stability at home would have helped them remain in school. Outside of the NYC DOE, the city must work to help ensure that households are earning a living wage or have additional support to survive and help their children thrive.

I wasn't financially stable and couldn't earn money at the same time as going to school. I couldn't afford basic needs, so I had to make a choice.

- Youth from the Bronx

For student parents, programs within the NYC DOE that provide childcare help them earn a high school credential. District 79, known as the alternative school district, offers the Living for the Young Family Through Education (LYFE) program that helps student parents working towards a high school diploma high school equivalency diploma (HSE) by offering childcare alongside supportive counseling and academic guidance. While programs such as LYFE are helpful for student parents, many do not know that this program is an option.

To support students that are working, the NYC DOE has two programs that support young people in their attainment of an HSE. One of these programs is the Pathways to Graduation (P2G) program. The P2G program provides instruction to help students earn their HSE. The program also includes career and college coaches, and offers professional training and paid internship opportunities. In addition to P2G, the Young Adult Borough Centers (YABCs) offer afternoon and evening programs designed to meet the needs of high school students who are behind in credit or have adult responsibilities that make it hard to attend school during the day. Students attend YABCs part-time in the afternoon or evening to earn a high school diploma. Both the P2G and YABC programs limit eligibility for students ages 21 and under.

Limited opportunities to participate in both school and afterschool programming

Studies have shown that there is a link between student engagement in in-school and afterschool programming, and improved academic performance. However, in-school and afterschool programming vary across New York City schools, and more affluent neighborhoods with more parent fundraising support often have greater ability to provide in-school and afterschool programming.³ 35% of our survey respondents stated that they wished they had more school opportunities both inside and outside of school. In fact, 30% said that more academic support such as tutoring would have helped them stay in school. These include not only academic tutoring, but extracurriculars such as art and sports, as well as more mentorship and career exploration and readiness opportunities.

Partnerships with non-profit and community-based organizations are essential to expanding programming in New York City schools. Results from our survey suggest that these partnerships should not only provide academic support, but also personal, professional, and leadership growth for young people. Community schools in New York City are a model for delivering these programs to students. With the support of partners, community schools provide a variety of supports to students, including in-school and afterschool programs, as well as health clinics and services for families. The community school model has reduced chronic absenteeism among students, and increased graduation rates: a recent RAND study found graduation rates in NYC community schools to be 7.2 percentage points higher than comparison schools.⁴

Need for more career development opportunities

Students also expressed a need for more programs that offer both personal and professional development. For personal development, this cohort would like to see more self-exploration built into offered programs, including self-assessments that identify a young person's strengths, interests, and passions. Career exploration was also a priority, especially in non-traditional sectors such as the arts. Participants also expressed the need for more career readiness skills and opportunities for networking and professional network growth within chosen career paths or sectors.

Many of my peers and I feel as though we lacked forms of work readiness during our academic career--there is an overall recognition that more workforce-focused preparation would have strongly benefited us.

- Youth from Brooklyn

Increasing multi-year mentoring programs focused on academic, personal, and career growth is key to supporting young people at risk of dropping out. Programs like City Year can provide not only provide additional guidance and support that students may not be receiving in school, but allow for career learning, helping young people map out their careers and connect to a professional network. Participation in these programs can improve students' academic performance, as well as promote social-emotional growth and self-esteem.⁵

New York City also currently offers career exploration through programs like the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which connects eligible young New Yorkers (ages 14-24) with paid work experience and career exploration. Currently, demand for SYEP placement outpaces available slots, pushing advocates across New York City to call for a universal SYEP program that would allow every interested NYC youth an SYEP placement. Other City programs that provide career exploration include the Department of Youth and Community Development's Advance and Earn program, which helps students attain their HSE while obtaining a paid internship and providing additional supports, and Train and Earn, which provides job training and employment services and additional supports. These programs not only help young people obtain an HSE or other credential but provide them with paid work opportunities with partnering organizations.

Unsafe Neighborhoods and Unreliable Transportation Impact Attendance and Academic Performance

Access to safe and reliable transportation can also impact student attendance and overall academic performance. In New York City, public transportation is the main mode of transportation. Train lines that run infrequently to areas where students may not feel safe may hinder their school attendance and engagement. Research by the Urban Institute found that, in cities with school choice, black children often travel farther and longer than their white and Latino classmates.⁶ In addition, living in more high crime areas may also increase stress levels for students. Students may be more concerned with survival and protecting themselves and their families than with school.

Neighborhood safety leads to youth feeling a sense of assurance or comfort which results in moving forward in academic or career pathways, the sense of being able to participate in after school activities because you know you can get home intact.

- Youth from the Bronx

Need for alternatives to standardized tests

Students feel strongly that a more personalized progress check is needed, rather than measuring progress with a standard test. Counselors and teachers should reach out to students more often in order to build a relationship and have meaningful check-ins to track their progress and provide any additional resources and support needed outside of just academics.

Students' academic potential and future should not be defined by their scoring on a one-time series of tests. These results become almost completely irrelevant in one's career endeavors, and may only be looked at when applying to college and/or continuing one's education.

- Youth from Manhattan

The Regents exam can be a significant barrier to attaining a high school diploma. In fact, New York is one of only 11 states that require passage of exams to graduate.⁷ Students feel that standardized tests are not an efficient way of measuring a student's ability to succeed in or after high school. Projects or portfolios should be considered in lieu of the regents. In fact, Black and Latino students are disproportionately impacted by these exams, further driving educational inequity in NY and leading to a higher dropout rate. There are better ways to assess students. The New York Performance Standards Consortium, for example, uses a performance-based assessment approach, tied to project-based learning, which has been highly successful.

The state focuses heavily on how students perform on the Regents that the real tools and opportunities needed for post-secondary success of youth become neglected. Every student deserves to feel confident and ready for life after high school, regardless of a test score.

- Youth from Manhattan

There are advantages and disadvantages to obtaining an HSE rather than a high school diploma. There is a general consensus that an HSE is not valued the same as a high school diploma. This cohort felt that employers and others saw the HSE as a "watered down" version of the diploma and were likely to hire someone with a diploma over someone with an HSE. In fact, one participant stated that the HSE, formerly known as the GED stood for "G(Good) E(Enough) D(Diploma)." More must be done to erase this stigma across all sectors, increasing access to employment for young adults today.

Although some see obtaining the HSE as a disadvantage, many felt that the HSE was a second chance. In fact, the majority felt that there were advantages to pursuing an HSE instead of a diploma. It allowed for young people to get ahead in terms of employment, allowing them to work and build their resumes. It also provided more time for them to think about what they wanted to do in the future and obtain more work experience and explore careers helping them make more informed career choices.

Policy Recommendations to Increasing Opportunities for New York City's Disconnected Youth

Address the Mental Health Needs of Young Adults Today

Increase access to quality mental health supports in middle school and high school

- Increase the number of guidance counselors, providing at least one for every grade and work to create a ratio of one counselor per 250 students as recommended by the American School Counselor Association.
- Invest in school and non-profit partnerships in order to meet the growing mental health needs of students. This would allow more non-profit counselors, such as that of Partnership with Children, to serve students in school that would not otherwise have been seen as a result of lack of counselors.
- Scale up peer mediation programs that allow for one-on-one connection between peers to help deescalate conflicts. This type of programming is often supported by non-profit partners that train and manage peer mediators.

Ensure counselors have the training and expertise to serve the unique needs of students.

Provide all counselors and school staff with professional development and additional resources.
 Counselors and school staff should receive anti-bias and culturally relevant training with a focus on addressing trauma. There is also a need to increase professional development to counselors to address disorders and other health conditions/disorders. Additional training that addresses bullying, including deescalating conflicts and enforcing restorative approaches is also needed.

Increase outreach and awareness of mental health resources and awareness.

- Increase awareness of school counseling services or other resources throughout the school and city. Awareness and outreach of additional resources and support should be shared widely within the school community and throughout the city, especially if the school does not provide enough resources. In addition, more advertisements throughout the city are needed and schools should meet students where they are at by providing apps with information or an intensive social media campaign.
- Build in mental health awareness and workshops in class or study halls. This will allow students to learn
 more about critical issues and approaches to managing their mental health. Exmaples include awareness of
 issues such as suicide awareness and managing stress and anxiety.
- Provide a personalized approach to meeting students' mental health needs. Counselor or school staff
 to visit students at home to get a better understanding of their needs and to meet families. Counselors or
 school staff would be aware of student circumstances and able to better support them through home visits
 and other outreach mechanisms.

Make system-wide investments in recruiting and retaining more diverse counselors and staff.

- Create a pipeline for more diverse counselors, educators, school staff, and leaders.
- Expand anti-bias training to school teachers and other school staff.

Ensure that Students have Access to the Non-academic Coursework and Opportunities for Academic, Personal, and Professional Growth

Expand curriculum to include more relevant and inclusive coursework for young New Yorkers

- Develop a more inclusive sexual health education curriculum in NYC DOE schools. There is a need to
 make the curriculum more inclusive of LGBTQIA+ experiences. In addition, partnerships with nonprofits like
 Planned Parenthood to teach sexual health education classes, and train peer educators to lead classes,
 would be more effective than having physical education or other teachers lead this course. Lastly, these
 classes are typically for a short duration of time, and extending the time frame of sexual education classes
 may also be more impactful.
- Increase life skills by including more "real world" application in coursework or offering additional classes or workshops on these vital skills. Examples of these skills include financial literacy (i.e. taxes, credit vs. debit), cooking, time management, and networking.

Increase both in school and afterschool programming to better support students and families.

Increase non-profit partnerships that allow for academic and non-academic support. The programs allow
 for career exploration, build career-readiness skills, provide opportunities for networking and growth within

certain sectors, and develop llfe skills. In addition, there is a need to increase programs that also provide additional tutoring and support such as City Year.

 Increase partnerships that allow for mentorship, and provide longer-term mentorships at an early age, starting at elementary school. Examples of these programs include Big Brother Big Sister or peer-to-peer mentoring that allows for older students to mentor younger students, pairing multilingual learners with students that speak the same language.

Improve Dropout Interventions Process and Approach

Provide extra academic support and more personalized counseling and progress checks

- **Provide extra academic support** while in school to prevent drop out, instead of schools sending home a "letter in doubt" when students are not performing academically,
- Provide more personalized counseling to prevent students from dropping out. Have counselors or other school staff members available to speak with students about why grades and attendance might be slipping, and develop a plan to prioritize and support these students.
- Allow for a more personalized progress check to meet the students where they are, rather than measuring
 progress with a standard test. Counselors and teachers should reach out to students more often to check-in
 and track their progress.

Improve Communication between Schools, Students, and Caretakers

Ensure language access at every school and a variety of communication outreach methods

- Ensure communications with parents/guardians are provided in multiple languages and that school staff can communicate with parents that speak other languages.
- Meet caretakers where they are and provide outreach and communications in ways parents and guardians can access, keeping in mind that not all caretakers have access to digital communication. Focus groups with parents and other ways to gather feedback from them to improve communications are needed.

Expand Programming for Students with Caregiving and Financial Responsibilities

Increase daycare and other programming options as well as communications about programs for student parents.

- Make daycare more accessible to student parents and invest in programs that connect students with childcare, such as the Living for the Young Family Through Education (LYFE) program.
- Increase communications and outreach about these programs across NYC communities.

Provide support for students that are helping to financially support their family

- Increase information and awareness about accessing essential needs resources, such as SNAP eligibility and enrollment and other support, in order to ensure that more families have their essential needs met.
- Provide a navigator approach to student and family enrollment in government support programs, within both the DOE and DYCD.

Provide Alternatives to High-stakes Standardized Testing

Introduce alternatives to the Regents Exams. Standardized tests are not an efficient way of measuring a student's ability to succeed in or after high school. Project-based learning or work-based opportunities should be piloted as an alternative to the Regents.

Conclusion

As New York City begins its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and a new class of policymakers take office across the five boroughs, there is a new opportunity to reimagine how our city supports young New Yorkers through high school and beyond. Centering the needs of out-of-school, out-of-work young people means centering equity in our city's policymaking — and the work could not be more urgent, as the pandemic has further destabilized the lives of thousands of young New Yorkers. We urge the next class of the City's leadership to listen to young adults, and secure the futures of the next generation of New Yorkers.

Acknowledgements

The Mayor's Fellowship in Policy and Advocacy would not be possible without the support from the Young Men's Initiative, the Department of Youth and Community Development, and the NYC Center for Youth Employment. We also want to thank the following individuals who helped shape this program: Zain Khan, Ginnah Etah, Shonda Murphy, and David Fischer.

We are grateful to all of our guest speakers who helped inform the Fellows about education, workforce, and career development issues across New York City and State. They include: Shonda Murphy, Jin Kim, Zain Khan, Ginnah Etah, Nathifa Forde, Candace Brazier-Thurman, Mark Fernandes, Matthew Eckel, Marissa Martin, Amanda Rosenblum, Joshua Poyer, J.T. Falcone, Evelyn Ortiz, Diana Cruz, Radeyah Hack, Amarachi Metu, Ayesha Islam, Sezlyn Petersen, Julia Breitman, and Stacey Oliger.

We would also like to thank the providers and their amazing staff that supported the Fellows throughout this process- AHRC's Arsen Babayan and Natalya Sarukhanova; Stanley Isaacs' Kathy Robles, and The Door's Nell Rainey, Basyah Rabhu, and Jeremy Nunez.

Endnotes

1 2020 Disconnected Youth Task Force Report, the City of New York. Retrieved from: <u>https://cye.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/</u> uploads/2020/11/DYTF-Connecting-Our-Future-Report.pdf

2 JobsFirstNYC, "With an Estimated 27 to 34 Percent of NYC Young Adults Out of School and Out of Work, What is the City's Plan?" "<u>https://jobsfirstnyc.org/latest/with-an-estimated-27-to-34-percent-of-nyc-young-adults-out-of-school-and-out-of-work-whats-thecitys-plan/</u>

3 Michael Elsen-Rooney, New York Daily News. "NYC school PTA fundraising data shows vast racial inequities," 12/9/19. Retrieved from: <u>https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-pta-funding-inequities-20191202-zcwa24grcfdjvg2mngvne6sl5i-story.</u> html.

4 Johnson, William et al, RAND Corporation. "Illustrating the Promise of Community Schools: An Assessment of the Impact of the New York City Community Schools Initiative." (2020) <u>https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3245.html</u>

5 DuBois, David et al. 2011. "How Effective Are Mentoring Programs for Youth? A Systematic Assessment of the Evidence," Psychological Science in the Public Interest. Retrieved from: http://www.rhodeslab.org/files/DuBoisetalMeta.pdf

6 Elissa Nadworny. "A High-crime Neighborhood Makes it Hard to Show Up for School." *NPR*. February 13, 2019. <u>https://www.npr.org/2019/02/13/693972661/a-high-crime-neighborhood-makes-it-harder-to-show-up-for-school</u>

7 "Graduation Test Update: Schools that Recently Eliminated or Scaled Back High School Exit (Updated May 2019). " Fairtest: The National Center for Fair and Open Testing. <u>https://www.fairtest.org/graduation-test-update-states-recently-eliminated</u>