

# LANDER

## for Mayor

### ***Great Public Schools for NYC***

*Brad’s “Framework for Great Public Schools” envisions a future where every child thrives—in schools that serve as engines of learning, leadership, equity, and innovation, driven by the collective power of educators, students, families, and communities.*

## **Executive Summary**

Brad is running for Mayor to deliver a safer, more affordable, thriving, and better run city for all New Yorkers. A critical part of that vision is lifting up what works in our public schools and ensuring it is available to every student. In every neighborhood.

[None of the other mayoral candidates have a comprehensive plan for public education](#). Public ed is too rarely discussed in our political debates. But Brad knows our public schools are the foundation of our shared democracy. He believes New York City’s schools must be designed not for a mythical “average student,” but to lift up every student’s unique talents, needs, and dreams. Our kids, families, and educators deserve a system built to help every child thrive, every family feel supported, and every educator be empowered to succeed.

Unfortunately, pandemic school closures worsened long-standing problems facing our schools, including [low levels of achievement in reading and math](#), [widening achievement gaps](#) between white and Asian students and their Black and Latino peers, [higher levels of chronic absenteeism](#), and higher levels of mental health challenges, [especially among teenagers](#). During the year-and-a-half of school closures, some parents [lost faith](#) that our leaders had the right priorities or that our schools could serve our kids reliably and well; by 2023, national confidence in our public school system had [fallen to an all-time low](#).

New York City [schools are not funded fairly](#), so they [lack the resources they need](#) to meet the goals we set. And our public school system remains [one of the most segregated in the country](#), limiting opportunity for students from different backgrounds to learn together. Rather than addressing the core issues, politicians like Andrew Cuomo label schools and educators as “failing,” [announce plans to fix them](#) while [fighting against the needed resources](#) – as Governor, Cuomo consistently refused to fully fund Foundation Aid for NYC’s schools – and then [abandon the efforts](#) the moment the going gets tough.

NYC’s affordability crisis has added to those challenges. Over the past few years, hundreds of thousands of families – most of them middle-class or working to reach it – left New York City, pushed out by the high costs of [housing and child care](#), leading to a [decline in public school enrollment](#). We now face real challenges in funding our schools – and a school system without the resources it needs, threatens to drive even more families out of the city.

On top of all that, the Trump administration is [slashing funding](#) and proposing to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education completely, threatening hundreds of millions of dollars of aid. The debate over the future of our schools could not be more urgent or important.

## Brad's Vision

To improve our schools, NYC must come together around a vision of what we believe K-12 public education is for. Is the main purpose to help all children achieve literacy and numeracy? Get them ready to succeed at work? Learn how to learn so they can adapt to a changing economy? Be kind to themselves and one another?

Brad believes that all those are important goals, but one central goal unites all of them: NYC Public Schools should help every child [develop what it takes to serve as a leader](#) in their community, to face the challenges in their own lives, and help solve the pressing issues that face all of us. In order to achieve this, we must help each child excel in core academic skills; but that alone is not enough. Each student must also:

1. **Find their passion and purpose.** Children learn best when they are inspired, and when they see that what they are learning matters – to themselves, their friends, and their community. They are more motivated when they understand how each of their unique stories fit into our shared history – and how their learning will empower them to shape its future.
2. **Fulfill their promise and potential.** We want our schools to help our children aspire and strive to develop all of their talents to the maximum so they can live up to their full potential. We want our children to have the skills and knowledge to pursue their goals.
3. **Contribute to our progress and prosperity.** Our children should help one another gain the skills they need to build a safer, freer, and more just city, country, and world for all.

## Brad's Framework for Great Public Schools

At a time when public education has been under attack and underfunded, Brad offers more than promises — he offers a track record of winning real improvements for kids, and a plan to deliver more. Brad's framework for great public schools will:

1. **Design the school system to enable every child to succeed.** For too long, we have built our school system as if most kids are “average” and can be served by a one-size-fits-all approach – and then we could add extra support for “everyone else.” Brad will change that. Every child has unique needs, challenges and gifts, and our schools must be equipped to help every student thrive. Classrooms designed to serve each child will serve all children better. Achieving this vision will require new investments, exceptional implementation, smart management and committed leadership.
  - **Improve student outcomes** by fully staffing schools with mental health and attendance supports, expanding real-world learning opportunities, and scaling innovative, culturally responsive instruction across the system.
  - **Increase access to enrichment that fuels students' passion & purpose** by expanding access to arts, athletics, libraries, academic enrichment programs, and career and technical paths.
  - **Guarantee access, equity, and belonging for all students** by expanding special education services, improving support for newly arrived and homeless students, and fixing enrollment and transportation system to meet families' real needs.
  - **Support families and strengthen family-community ties** by expanding universal child care, afterschool, and summer programs while transforming every school into a community hub with wraparound services.

2. **Recruit, support, and retain our educators.** New York City's schools cannot succeed without great educators, yet constant policy shifts, bureaucratic overload, and lack of support have driven talented teachers away; Brad will fix this by providing teachers with more support in classrooms in schools, investing in mentorship and professional growth, and building a system that respects and retains the educators our students deserve.
  - **Strengthen school-based support for educators** by expanding Teacher Centers to every school, investing in experienced instructional coaches, and ensuring leadership teams have the developmental expertise needed to guide effective teaching at every grade level.
  - **Build a strong and diverse teaching pipeline** by offering free CUNY education to future educators and launching a high school Teacher Corps to recruit, support, and train the next generation of diverse, well-prepared public school teachers.
  - **Make teaching a sustainable career** by improving pay and career pathways for paraprofessionals and helping educators achieve homeownership through his *Homes for City Workers* program.
3. **Empower educators and families to help lead our schools.** To build a school system that enables every child to succeed, Brad will strengthen public schools as the foundation of our democracy by giving educators and parents more voice in the key decisions affecting our children to improve their schools.
  - **Make it easier and more equitable for students and parents to participate** by providing stipends, child care, translation, training, and remote access to public meetings so that every family—regardless of income, language, or schedule—has a voice.
  - **Foster shared leadership in schools** by empowering principals, teachers, students and parents to share in decision-making and modeling that partnership at every level of the system.
  - **Reform school governance for real accountability** by replacing unchecked mayoral control with a balanced system that maintains central leadership while adding City Council oversight and greater community input.
4. **Measure and manage what matters.** Brad will use cutting-edge tools, based on the latest research, to measure the key activities within schools that drive better student outcomes: from the amount of time teachers have to collaborate on lesson planning, to a principal's ability to partner with parents for improvement, to how safe students feel day-to-day – and then hold everyone responsible for improvement, while providing the resources to achieve it.
  - **Track and publicly report student outcomes** with a focus on achievement gaps and progress for all student groups, to drive improvement and accountability in NYC schools.
  - **Monitor daily school practices that drive success** such as instruction, assessments, teacher collaboration, environment, leadership, and family-community ties, to ensure resources are targeted where schools need them most.
  - **Build a public dashboard with real-time, actionable data about school performance**, empowering informed action from students, parents, educators, and leaders to drive improvement.
  - **Hold leadership accountable** for addressing challenges identified through data, while ensuring flexibility in instructional approaches to support diverse schools and initiatives.
5. **Fully fund New York City public schools with transparency and accountability.** New York City's public schools face persistent funding challenges rooted in outdated and inequitable state policies which were made significantly worse under the leadership of former governor Andrew Cuomo, who consistently shortchanged New York City public schools. Brad will fight to fully fund public schools to ensure that

every child—regardless of neighborhood—has access to a high-quality, equitable education and a fair shot at a brighter future.

- **Win increased State funding for pressing new needs.**
- **Improve DOE efficiency to redirect funding to classrooms.**
- **Reform PEP budget oversight to ensure transparency and accountability.**
- **Provide predictability through responsible budgeting at City Hall.**

## Brad's Solution

### I. Invest in the school system to enable every child to succeed.

For too long, we have designed our schools as if most children needed an average set of services and supports, and then we could add extra support for “everyone else.” NYC Public Schools has separate offices and management teams for students with disabilities, students learning English, students who are unhoused, students struggling with mental health, and the list goes on. Educators are often left to help families navigate a maze of disconnected offices, leaving families without the coordinated services and supports they need.

Especially since the pandemic, it has become increasingly clear that designing and managing schools for a mythical “average” child makes no sense. Every child brings both unique needs and special gifts to school – and many face challenges at some point along the way. [One in five](#) of our children have a disability, [more of our children](#) are struggling with mental health than ever before, [over 16% of our kids are learning English](#), [3,650 high school students were bullied or harassed last year](#) while [40% of 9th graders living in poverty were chronically absent](#) during their first year in high school, and [more NYC families are experiencing homelessness](#) than at any time since the Great Depression.

- **One in eight NYC students is unhoused** and many are [forced to travel long distances to school](#) because social services and the school system fail to coordinate – driving up **chronic absenteeism** among our most vulnerable children.
- **Students with disabilities** still go without the services they are entitled to by law, forced to sue the Department in order to get the help they need; as Brad uncovered in a [recent report](#), the Department is spending ten times more on special education claims than it did ten years ago, but still failing to deliver mandated special education services to thousands of students. Decades after the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA,) NYC public schools [remain largely inaccessible](#), burdened by a [broken busing system](#) and a [failure to provide special education services](#) to thousands of preschool age and school age children who need them.
- **Mental health support is lacking** in many schools; a recent audit found that too many NYC public schools are understaffed with mental health professionals, provide inadequate staff training and offer too few readily available services —while the Department provides little oversight to ensure students receive the critical mental health instruction needed to build awareness of the issues and resilience.
- **Students learning English** [still fall behind](#) on graduation and other measures of student progress, even years after they enter school.

We need a fundamentally new approach. Brad's vision is to give our teachers and schools what they need to help every child thrive in any school— because classrooms designed to support all students, with their diverse gifts, challenges, backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, will serve every child better. This shift is essential to developing the next generation of leaders. It is hard to overstate the importance of this shift, or

the difficulty of it. It will take time, new investments, exceptional implementation, patience, and smart management to achieve. Above all, it will require a leader with the vision, commitment and tenacity to drive real change. Brad has the experience and skills to make this extraordinary change.

Brad applauds the recent decision to [implement reduced class sizes in NYC schools](#), bringing them in line with other districts across the state – a move that Andrew Cuomo resisted for years, instead investing in high-stakes tests and privatization. Implementing effective changes to class size that result in the outcomes we seek – while maintaining equity, given that some schools in low-income neighborhoods have seen declining enrollment – will require leadership focused on outcomes. This change will have three key impacts: it will allow educators to pay more attention to each child and tailor instruction to their specific needs. It will create calmer classrooms where students and educators can work together more effectively. And finally, it will give teachers more time to collaborate and strengthen their practice.

But implementation will be key: the Adams and Cuomo administrations were [never able to manage big education system changes well](#). Brad will bring his focus, expertise, and experience to the task, to ensure that all schools receive the support they need to succeed in this effort.

**As Mayor, Brad will:**

### **Improve student outcomes**

- **Ensure every school has the resources needed to tackle chronic absenteeism and support the mental health and well-being of all our children.** The American School Counselor Association [recommends](#) at least one counselor for every 250 students – a standard New York City has [yet to meet](#). Brad will close that gap, while giving schools the flexibility to decide how best to deploy those resources to meet their students' needs. He will also invest in [mental health training](#) for educators, equipping them to better support our kids. In addition to strengthening in-school supports, Brad will expand the number of [attendance teachers](#) and community coordinators to help connect students and families to the services they need to stay engaged and succeed.
- **Implement effective instruction, curriculum and program innovations throughout the system.** Brad will build on what has worked in NYC, while borrowing the best ideas from everywhere. He will expand on the progress of two existing citywide initiatives – NYC Reads and NYC Solves – to help our students become critical readers and complex problem-solvers. Through innovative high school programs, Brad will position NYC as a leader in real-world learning – equipping students with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking they need to lead and shape our communities.
- **Retain and expand culturally responsive curricula and make those learning opportunities available to every student** to enable them to see their history and lived experiences in their education. DOE's new Black Studies Curriculum as well as the Hidden Voices series are examples of initiatives that promote inclusion, leadership, and civic engagement, ensuring young people understand bias and discrimination while fostering a sense of belonging, civil rights, and community building.
- **Increase the number of high schools and programs that offer greater academic challenge, and a wider range of career and technical education**—such as those using early college high-school, alternative assessments, international models, and innovative STEM initiatives like the Brooklyn STEAM Center. Brad will ensure schools are designed to connect students with real-world opportunities in teaching, healthcare, technology, and emerging industries through strong CTE programs, paid internships, and college pathways like College Now.

### **Increase access to enrichment that fuels students' passion & purpose**

- **Protect and further strengthen our arts, athletics and enrichment programs (instead of cutting them).** Brad's plan will fully fund arts education in our schools after many years of neglect, and he will tap into the unmet potential of culture and arts education to support well-being by further integrating culture and arts into services for students with disabilities. *Read Brad's Arts and Culture plan. [Coming soon.](#)*
- **Expand Access to Libraries for Every Student.** Brad will launch a citywide initiative with the Department of Education and NYC's three public library systems to automatically register every public school student for a library card—empowering young people to access the full range of library resources. At the same time, he'll champion investments in school libraries, working to ensure every school has access to a fully stocked library staffed by a certified librarian. [Read Brad's Libraries plan.](#)

### **Guarantee access, equity, and belonging for all students.**

- **Expand support for children with disabilities.** Brad will improve evaluations and expand access to special education services so no child with disabilities is ever placed on a waitlist for the support they need and are entitled to receive. He will implement [Universal Design for Learning](#) in every school, ensure every new school is fully inclusive, increase investment in accessibility and related services, guarantee timely evaluation and preschool placements for every student, and fix school transportation so it serves all our students reliably and equitably.
- **Improve resources for schools serving newly arrived students.** Brad will ensure school budgets can better adapt to mid-year enrollment changes, prioritize coordination on critical issues like shelter closings and bus transportation, require that language and IEP evaluations for newly arrived students occur within 2 weeks of arrival, and guarantee that every district has access to bilingual staff who can be deployed to schools as needed.
- **Ensure that students who are homeless can continue to attend their school.** This can only be done through focused management from City Hall, as it will require close partnership and coordination between Homeless Services and the schools, and improving school transportation. Brad will make sure the chancellor and commissioner make this a priority and address this critical issue.
- **Reset the Family Outreach and Enrollment office.** Everyone with friends or family in our public schools have heard stories about how hard enrollment can be, with confusing choices and stressful lotteries. We will reform the existing system to create a team that reaches out to families, offers tailored help to those that need it, and helps each family find the right fit for their child as they sign up – from 2-K to high school.

### **Support families and strengthen family-community ties**

- **Universal child care, beginning with making good on the promise of 3-K for all and introducing 2-K for our 2-year-olds:** Brad will fulfill the promise of guaranteed, affordable childcare for all families. [Read Brad's full plan](#) to accomplish this goal.
- **Universal afterschool and summer programming:** Brad will drastically expand access to ensure that children have a safe and enriching environment outside of traditional school hours. [Read Brad's full plan](#) to accomplish this goal. As part of this initiative, Brad will **transform every school into a community school** – providing wraparound services for students and families and strengthening each school's relationship with the surrounding community. This proven model [boosts attendance and academic outcomes](#) and Brad will make it happen within four years.

## **II. Recruit, support and retain our educators.**

New York City cannot deliver the education our children deserve without recruiting, supporting, and retaining excellent educators. Yet for too long, we've asked teachers and school leaders to navigate shifting priorities and unclear expectations. [What we ask teachers to teach](#) and [how we measure what children have learned](#)



[change](#) constantly, often without sufficient evidence or input from those doing the work. Educators are asked to adapt to major shifts in curriculum and assessment before we even know if the strategies will benefit students, creating confusion and instability across classrooms. We are moving in the right direction with evidence based solutions such as NYC Reads, but implementation has been spotty. [Teachers need more support](#) as they implement the changes.

At the same time, we've burdened educators with a growing list of compliance tasks—[forms, checklists, mandates](#)—that take precious time and focus away from teaching and learning. While we demand more paperwork, we fail to provide the time, resources, or flexibility to foster real innovation. Teachers need the space to design meaningful learning experiences that keep pace with the evolving world their students are entering. Instead, rigid systems and outdated incentives stifle creativity and hold back progress.

Most damaging of all, we have not treated educators as the skilled professionals they are, which hurts morale and makes it [harder to recruit](#) the brightest minds into our classrooms and keep them there. This is particularly true for teachers of color. If we want to attract and keep great educators in every classroom, we must build a system that respects their expertise, backs them with resources, and invites them to lead the way forward. As Mayor, Brad will:

### **Strengthen school-based support for educators**

- **Create Teacher Centers for All.** Since 1979, [Teacher Centers](#) in NYC have improved schools by providing experienced coaches to help each teacher refine their craft, fostering collaboration to track student progress, and supporting continuous learning of the most effective research-based instructional methods in literacy and math. Brad will expand on this model by introducing mentorship and apprenticeship programs to better on-board new teachers—so they can succeed, grow and stay in the profession— and provide high-quality support for implementation of programs like NYC Reads. There are currently 208 Teacher Centers; Brad's plan will establish one in every school.
- **Invest in more experienced instructional coaches** to help teachers improve their practice. [Research has shown](#) that providing individualized, consistent focused support to a teacher can improve student outcomes, and NYC Public Schools has used this approach successfully—but implementation has been uneven. We need to increase our investment here and support Teacher Centers and leaders to work together to identify when and where it will be most effective.
- **Ensure that each superintendent's office has expertise on each stage of child development to supervise and mentor coaches and principals.** We have one set of superintendents overseeing all the schools that serve children ages 3 to 14 across a district, while another oversees all high schools in a large region. But educators will tell you that children, on average, have a unique set of needs from birth to age 8, as they learn to interact with the world around them, begin to build social skills, and gain the fundamental skills needed to read and think mathematically. And children from 9-14 are learning to analyze what they read, think more deeply about mathematical concepts, and work with more complex social skills and emotions. It makes no sense to ask a superintendent who has worked their whole career with middle schools to help a principal with the unique challenges of a school serving 2-8 year olds who are, say, struggling to gain reading proficiency. Brad will ensure that each superintendent has a deputy that complements their expertise and experience; a superintendent who knows middle schools will have a deputy for ages 2-8 (from 2-K through early literacy) and vice versa.

### **Build a strong and diverse teaching pipeline**

- **Offer free CUNY education for public service jobs with the City, like public school teachers, nurses, paras and social workers and cops** (via a five-year tuition repayment program). One-third of all NYC public school teachers are CUNY graduates, and given the need to recruit more teachers to meet the

class size law, and the lack of bilingual and STEM educators and special education teachers that currently exists, Brad will launch a pilot program to make the first two years of CUNY free to students who commit to teaching in NYC public schools when they graduate.

- **Launch a public high school Teacher Corps** to create a clear, supportive pathway into the teaching profession—especially for students of color. With DOE projected to need 10,000 new teachers to meet class size mandates, Brad will establish high school teacher academies to identify and support future educators early. Participants will receive fast-tracked admission to CUNY undergraduate and graduate teaching programs grounded in evidence-based instruction, along with paid internships in after-school programs, two years of free CUNY, a paid residency in their final year, financial support for graduate school, certification, and licensure, and expanded loan forgiveness. Research shows that even one [teacher of color can make a significant positive impact on student outcomes](#).

### **Make teaching a sustainable career**

- **Bolster pay increases and professional development opportunities for paraprofessionals** whose support is essential to student experience and outcomes, mandated for many students with disabilities, and valued by teachers who often rely on para assistance in the classroom. Programs such as the Career Training Program (CTP) and LEAP to Teachers which provide paras with a subsidized pathway to becoming a teacher should be expanded.
- **Enable New York City municipal employees – including teachers and paras – to achieve home ownership** through Brad’s [Homes for City Workers](#) program, which will deploy pension fund investments to double the purchasing power of City workers, thus cutting both the required downpayment and monthly mortgage payment in half.

## **III. Empower parents, students and educators to make key decisions**

Schooling is not a service provided by a corporation; it is a democratic enterprise designed to produce the next generation of leaders. Yet too often, the people closest to our schools are excluded from decision-making by structural barriers including lack of time, compensation, language access, and transparency. And the current system of Mayoral control leaves too few systems of accountability. Under Brad’s plan, families and educators closest to the schools will be empowered to make key decisions, with full access to all the information and support they need to do what’s best for their communities.

Brad is committed to enable teachers, parents and students to participate as real decision-makers in our public school system – an effort that will require a few major shifts.

### **As Mayor, Brad will:**

1. **Empower parents to participate by providing pay and other supports.** Parents need more than just encouragement to participate effectively in helping to lead our schools. Those who have small children at home cannot participate without support. Without reliable translation services, parents who speak a language other than English are left out. And, perhaps most important, without compensation for the time it takes to participate thoughtfully, we restrict these opportunities only to parents who can afford to volunteer.

If we want real representative parent and student voice in our schools, we need to provide reliable translation and on-site child care at every meeting. We need to provide training and support to any parent that wants it. And we must provide [stipends and training](#) to participants to ensure every family,



regardless of circumstance, has the opportunity to contribute. BradFinally, we need to keep track of who is playing leadership roles at each school, and work with principals to make sure they hear from a representative group.

2. **Make it easier for students and parents to participate in public meetings.** While the Department holds a number of different meetings that create opportunities for public input, they are often held at inconvenient times, and you have to show up in person to be heard. With today's technology, we can make this easier. Brad will fight for the state authorization needed to ensure that all public meetings have the option for remote participation, both live over Zoom, or by e-mailing in after watching a recording.
3. **Principals will be supported and expected to work in true partnership** with teachers, parents, and students (in high schools) in making key decisions in schools, helping superintendents identify where additional support is needed. The chancellor, central leadership, and superintendents must model this approach by inviting greater participation from principals, educators and families into their own decision-making processes.
4. **Reform school governance to ensure accountability while improving stakeholder input.** Brad will work with stakeholders to reform school governance to maintain accountability but improve meaningful engagement. The Mayor will continue to select and supervise the Schools Chancellor, with "advice and consent" of the City Council. SLTs will be strengthened and empowered within their schools. CECs and the PEP will be reformed to address infinitesimally low voter turnout and improve the quality and breadth of participation to ensure the school system serves the diverse needs of students, families, and educators.

## IV. Measure and manage what matters

The City's [failure to measure what matters](#) has left the City susceptible to bad ideas about quick fixes, demoralizing the teams hard at work every day, and scaring families with resources out of the system. Over the last twenty years, the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research developed [a proven, effective method of measuring school quality that makes sense](#). School systems around the country have built upon this and unveiled a new [Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency](#) system that makes key information available to parents, educators, and system leaders.

To put Brad's Framework for Great Public Schools into effect, Brad will develop a version of this successful model of measuring school quality tailored to New York City.

A tool for learning, improvement and accountability, the system will use and make public a few key measures of student outcomes with a focus on racial achievement gaps, including:

- Student proficiency, based on state and national assessments;
- Academic growth over time, and growth compared to students in similar schools;
- Percentage of students on-track to graduation;
- [Chronic absenteeism](#);
- Mental and physical health;
- High-school dropout rate;
- Graduation rate;

- Early college and career credentials, such as the percentage of high school students that graduate with a passing grade in an Advanced Placement and/or College Now course, or a career certification.
- College enrollment, and college persistence.

For each of these, we will break out and examine differences in outcomes for students facing specific challenges, including but not limited to students with disabilities, English language learners, students in temporary housing and foster care, and students with interrupted learning.

But managing based on outcomes alone is like trying to coach a team based solely on their win-loss record. “Win more games” is not helpful advice! The NYC Framework for Great Public Schools will focus on key measures of what is happening daily in schools – so educators, parents, and leaders can work together to marshal and target resources where each school needs them most.

Here are a few examples of what the NYC Framework for Great Schools will measure in our schools:

- **Rigorous Instruction**
  - Are the curricula and instruction designed to engage students, foster critical-thinking skills, and help them learn the skills and content they need to succeed?
  - Do educators have the training and support they need to implement it well? Do they have the flexibility they need to develop and revise it to make it work for their students?
- **Effective Assessments**
  - Are schools assessing student learning in ways that give students the opportunity to authentically demonstrate knowledge and skills?
  - Do the assessments fit the instructional approach and curriculum used in the school?
  - Do they create opportunities to provide meaningful feedback so that students can grow and improve?
- **Collaborative Teachers**
  - Do teachers participate in opportunities to develop, grow, and contribute to the continuous improvement of the school community?
  - Do teaching teams have the time and resources they need to collaborate in order to meet the needs of every student?
- **Supportive Environment**
  - Does the school foster a culture where all students feel safe and included?
  - Do students receive appropriate support in response to their physical, social, and emotional needs?
  - Do students have access to enrichment opportunities, like arts and sports, during and after school?
  - Are students getting the services and supports they need to succeed? Specifically, are students with disabilities and English language learners receiving the supports to which they are entitled?
- **Effective School Leadership**
  - Does school leadership inspire the school community with a clear vision and plan to realize that vision?
  - Does the leader foster a culture of continuous improvement?
- **Strong Family-Community Ties**
  - Does the school form effective partnerships with families and community organizations to improve the school?
  - Does the leader work collaboratively with parents to address their concerns?

Brad will build a transparent dashboard that tracks what truly matters, giving everyone – from students and parents to principals, the chancellor, and the Mayor himself – real-time insight into how individuals, schools, and the system as a whole are performing. By making the data open and accessible, Brad will help empower informed action at every level to drive school improvement.

Then, he will hold the chancellor accountable for supporting school leaders, and hold leaders responsible for addressing challenges identified through the data. For example, if teachers report they lack sufficient time they need to implement a new assessment effectively, school leaders must act – and superintendents and central leadership must provide the necessary support.

Importantly, this approach does not mandate a one-size-fits-all model of instruction. One of our system's strengths is its diverse approaches – from [International Schools](#) and [programs using alternative assessments](#), to [Expeditionary Learning](#) and many more – and the Framework is flexible enough to identify each school's strengths and areas for growth. Brad will utilize the Framework to audit and measure the successes of current initiatives like NYC Reads and Solves.

Research shows that when we monitor, measure, and manage the day-to-day work inside schools in thoughtful, collaborative ways, student outcomes improve. We will work together to raise the next generation of leaders for our city and nation.

## **V. Fully fund New York City's Public Schools with transparency & accountability**

Fully funding public schools is essential to ensuring every child—regardless of neighborhood—has access to a high-quality, equitable education and a fair shot at a brighter future. Unfortunately, New York City's public schools face persistent funding challenges rooted in outdated and inequitable state policies. During his tenure as governor, Andrew Cuomo consistently obstructed equitable funding for New York City's public schools. Despite acknowledging the unfairness of the state's property tax-based education funding system in 2010, Cuomo failed to fulfill his promise to fully fund the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) settlement. Instead, he cut over \$1 billion from public education budgets, disproportionately affecting Black, Latino, and low-income communities. This led to a significant increase in the spending gap between the wealthiest and poorest districts, which grew by 20% under his leadership, reaching a record high of \$10,400 per pupil in 2020.

The consequences of Cuomo's policies have been profound for New York City's students. Chronic underfunding has resulted in overcrowded classrooms, insufficient access to arts and music programs, and a lack of essential support services. Cuomo's tenure also saw a push towards privatization, with support from hedge fund billionaires advocating for charter school expansion at the expense of neighborhood public schools. This shift diverted resources away from public schools, further exacerbating educational inequities.

The state's Foundation Aid formula, designed to ensure fair distribution of educational resources, has not been meaningfully updated in over 15 years, despite significant changes in student demographics, educational standards, and regional costs. This stagnation has led to systemic underfunding, particularly in high-need districts, undermining the constitutional mandate to provide all students with a sound basic education.

Compounding the issue, a significant portion of city school funds—approximately 33%—are allocated through mechanisms that do not account for individual school needs, perpetuating disparities across the system. Recent efforts to reassess and reform the funding formula have been criticized for lacking transparency and failing to prioritize educational adequacy.

As Mayor, Brad will commit to ensuring that every school has the resources and staff it needs—guidance counselor, social worker, librarian, while reducing class sizes and maintaining the equitable distribution of funding citywide that is one of the underlying functions of the formula.

#### As Mayor, Brad will:

- **Win increased State funding for pressing new needs.** The Campaign for Fiscal Equity achieved historic increases in funding for New York’s school. But the pandemic exposed significant new needs. Brad will push the State to boost investments in universal child care, afterschool programs, mental health services, student wellbeing, addressing chronic absenteeism, and a new generation of CTE programs. He will also work to modernize the state’s [school funding formula](#) – which has remained unchanged since it was adopted in 2007 – to ensure that every child, in every neighborhood, gets the education they deserve.
- **Improve DOE efficiency to redirect funding to classrooms.** Brad will modernize administrative procedures at the Department of Education—currently exempt from standard City procurement rules—to identify savings and increase transparency, so more dollars go directly to the classroom.
- **Reform PEP budget oversight to ensure transparency and accountability.** The Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) is responsible for approving major decisions, including the NYC school budget—but too often, key votes take place before critical funding details are finalized, with limited community input. Brad will structure the process so budget votes are taken when funding formulas and allocations are clearly defined, publicly release school-level budget data in advance, and ensure that school leaders, parents, students, and educators have a meaningful voice in the process.
- **Provide predictability through responsible budgeting at City Hall.** Brad will end the “budget dance” of cuts to vital programs like 3-K, Pre-K, afterschool, SYEP, and special education by implementing his [Fiscal Framework](#)—ensuring permanent, guaranteed funding and a stable budget cushion each year, and making sure that the most vital programs are never held hostage to politics.

## The Results

By shifting to a more democratic school system in which we measure and manage what matters and make smart investments in students, educators and families, we can make the best school system in the country:

#### For Students

- **More personalized, supportive classrooms** that recognize every student’s unique needs, gifts, and challenges—not a one-size-fits-all system.
- **Smaller class sizes**, implemented with real planning and transparency to allow more individualized attention and calmer, more effective classrooms.
- **Expanded enrichment opportunities**, including fully funded arts education, athletics, academic acceleration, and CTE programs that connect learning to real-world jobs.
- **Stronger supports for students with disabilities**, including early intervention, timely evaluations, accessible schools, and reliable transportation.
- **Better services for English learners, newly arrived immigrants, and homeless students**, with timely assessments, flexible school budgets, and coordination between agencies.
- **Safe, inclusive school environments** where all students feel they belong and are supported socially, emotionally, and academically.

- **Access to mental health professionals and attendance support**, with trained educators and additional community coordinators in every school.
- **Expanded access to libraries**, with every student automatically registered for a library card and school libraries staffed by certified librarians.
- **Increased opportunities for leadership and student voice.**

## For Families

- **Guaranteed, affordable child care**, including the full promise of universal 3-K and new 2-K programs for two-year-olds.
- **Drastically expanded afterschool and summer programs**, giving kids safe, enriching options beyond the school day.
- **Every school transformed into a community hub**, offering wraparound services to support the whole child and the family.
- **Genuine family participation**, supported by stipends, translation, childcare, transportation, and flexible meeting options—so every parent can have a voice.
- **A simpler, more supportive enrollment experience**, with outreach teams that help families navigate school choice from 2-K to high school.
- **Real input into school decisions**, including how school budgets are spent, through collaborative leadership with principals and educators.

## For Educators

- **A better daily experience**, with less bureaucracy, clearer goals, and the flexibility to teach effectively and creatively.
- **Teacher Centers in every school**, providing mentorship, coaching, and support to grow professionally and implement initiatives like NYC Reads.
- **More experienced instructional coaches**, equipping teachers with consistent, research-based support to improve student outcomes.
- **Superintendent teams with developmental expertise**, ensuring school leaders receive stage-appropriate guidance and support.
- **Free CUNY education and a clear pathway into the profession**, especially for future teachers of color through a high school Teacher Corps.
- **Stronger career ladders for paraprofessionals**, with expanded programs like LEAP to Teachers and better pay and professional development.
- **Support for homeownership**, through Brad's Homes for City Workers program that cuts monthly payments and down payments in half.

## Brad's Record

Brad not only has a strategy – he has the experience and management skills to see it through. As a champion for public schools, the son of a public elementary school counselor, a public school K-12 student himself, and the father of two PreK-12 NYC public school graduates, Brad knows firsthand how strong schools build strong communities. In the City Council, Brad invested millions in his district's public schools. He [led the campaign that secured air-conditioning in every classroom](#) after exposing that 25% of NYC classrooms lacked it. As the long time host of the Brooklyn PTA Fun Run Brad helped raise tens of thousands of dollars for local public schools. He [sponsored the School Diversity Accountability Act](#), to hold DOE accountable for confronting segregation.

Along with parents, students, and educators, he helped create the plan to adopt a [bold, community-driven middle school integration plan in Brooklyn's District 15](#), which is now showing real success. And a recent Comptroller's report he commissioned shows that inclusive school mergers can [reduce class sizes, advance integration, and improve student outcomes at the same time](#).

As Comptroller, Brad helped lead the successful fight against Mayor Adams' devastating proposal to cut the budgets of 77% of New York City's public schools — and against Adams' cuts to 3-K, Pre-K, and CUNY. He also developed comprehensive strategies to [better serve students with disabilities while saving hundreds of millions of dollars wasted on due process claims](#). Brad has led and supported key efforts to make New York City's education system more fair and functional. He helped lead the campaign for **Promise NYC**, securing funding for schools enrolling newcomer students, and fought to end the cruel 60-day shelter limits imposed by Mayor Adams. He ensured that dozens of early childhood education providers—facing insolvency due to DOE payment and contract delays—received the funding they were owed. As a member of the Panel for Educational Policy, Brad has played a key role in DOE procurement oversight and served on both the **Fair Student Funding** and **Class Size** Working Groups. As Comptroller, his audits and investigations [exposed the DOE's failure to comply with federal asbestos monitoring](#) requirements and [revealed the need for reform in the CCEC election process](#).

Brad has the skills and track record to fulfill the promise of strengthening forms of democratic participation in our schools. In 2011, he was one of four Council Members to introduce [participatory budgeting](#) in NYC, a groundbreaking new process in which residents decide themselves how public dollars will be spent. Today, the process has spread to 24 council districts across the city, with neighbors allocating over \$20 million per year. That is the kind of real impact Brad wants parents and educators to have in their schools.