



## 2023-24 Legislative Priorities

### Funding and Legislative Requests

The federal government’s one-time COVID-19 relief funding sources have provided vital support for school districts as we rebuild from the deeply challenging effects of the pandemic. However, when those one-time federal funds expire in 2024, school districts could be facing significant budget challenges as we seek to sustain the badly needed programs, services and staffing that are making a difference in student success.

With this fiscal reality and our students’ needs in mind, the City School District of Albany is grateful for the state’s strong commitment to fully funding Foundation Aid. The support that Governor Hochul and the Legislature have consistently demonstrated toward this critical need, their emphasis on equity for all students, and their recognition of school districts’ unique needs in making fiscal and programmatic decisions, is greatly appreciated. We hope and anticipate that that commitment will remain unwavering throughout this year’s budget-development process.

To further support our students’ needs, our school district asks for additional support in these specific areas for the 2023-24 school year:

Funding area	Overview	2023-24 request
<b>Equitable pre-K funding</b>	As an early implementer of full-day pre-K (1990), our high-needs urban district has been left behind in the state’s current effort to expand UPK funding to all districts statewide. We ask that the state provide full funding for our existing pre-K programming to support our focus on robust early childhood programming.	\$1.26 million to offset the annual local expenditure currently used to support our current pre-K programming
<b>Support for teacher pipeline/ Grow Your Own initiatives</b>	The statistics for the future of teaching in New York are well-known and daunting, especially as our population continues to age and diversify. We applaud programs such as the state’s My Brother’s Keeper Teacher Opportunity Corps II program, and the meaningful steps that Governor Hochul and the Legislature are taking to address these significant challenges through support for additional teacher pipeline and Grow Your Own initiatives.	\$300,000 to support our partnership with the Albany Public School Teachers Association to establish a Grow Your Own Career and Technical Education teaching pathway that would serve our middle and high school students

**VISION STATEMENT**

*The City School District of Albany will be a district of excellence with caring relationships and engaging learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for all students to reach their potential.*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*We will work in partnership with our diverse community to engage every learner in a robust educational program designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for success.*

<p><b>Social-emotional/ mental health supports</b></p>	<p>Supporting social-emotional and mental health needs has long been a priority for our school district. It is critical now more than ever as we continue to build back from the pandemic, with all of the added stressors it has created for students and families. Anxiety and depression over financial instability, health risks, social isolation and loss of opportunities have compounded the stress teens and families already encounter, especially in communities with high levels of poverty.</p>	<p>\$600,000 to support two school counselors, two social workers, two behavior specialists and programming for social-emotional learning</p>
<p><b>Charter school oversaturation</b></p>	<p>In the current school year, 22% of the K-12 students enrolled in our city’s publicly funded schools attend charter schools. This makes Albany one of the most oversaturated cities in New York and the nation – and more expansion is planned.</p>	<p>Legislative and fiscal support to limit the destabilizing fiscal impact of the current charter school funding mechanism in districts that have a high percentage of charter students</p>
<p><b>Support for ENL and refugee students</b></p>	<p>Albany is one of 34 cities nationally designated as resettlement communities in the U.S. Committee for Refugee and Immigrants’ Reception and Placement Program, our school district is strongly committed to meeting the academic and social-emotional needs of our English-language learners. However, additional resources are needed as this fragile student population grows, and to assist in meeting the unfunded mandates of the state’s CR Part 154.</p>	<p>\$3 million for the 30 faculty and staff members directly serving refugee and immigrant students in our optional K-12 Albany International Center two-year transition program</p>
<p><b>Expanded Community Schools funding</b></p>	<p>New York’s commitment to Community Schools has provided meaningful resources for our schools currently designated to receive this support. We are investing our \$4.5 million in Community Schools funding for 2022-23 to support eight buildings with the highest needs, allowing them to invest in valuable additional programs and services for students and families.</p>	<p>An additional \$4.5 million in Community Schools funding so that we can expand this valuable programming to the eight schools in our district that do not currently receive this support</p>