

Children First: Helping All Students Succeed

Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein launched the Children First reforms in 2002, soon after the Mayor became accountable for the schools. The goal? Changing a system that too often put the interests of adults ahead of the needs of students. In just six years, the reforms have transformed public education in New York City, helping more children meet and exceed standards and graduate from high school ready for college. The reforms are premised on the idea that all students can thrive in the classroom, no matter where they come from and now matter how difficult their life circumstances.

How We're Improving Our Schools

- **Attracting great teachers** – Teachers are the single most important influence over student achievement. That's why we're paying teachers 43% more than ever before, investing in their training, and making sure that only those who do right by New York City students have positions in classrooms. We're also attracting the very best teachers to the classrooms with the highest needs students who need great teachers most.
- **Empowering principals** – Principals know their schools best, so we have given them decision-making power over school budgets, staffing, programming, and supports. Instead of spending money "on behalf" of schools, we've cut \$350 million from the bureaucracy since 2002 and sent it directly to schools and classrooms where it can have a direct impact on student learning.
- **Rewarding improvement** – We're motivating schools, teachers, and students—creating incentives to encourage achievement. We've created performance bonuses for teachers, principals, and students.
- **Giving schools and families the information they need** – Today, New York City parents have more information than ever about how schools are supporting their children. Parents can find out how well their children are performing through the year—and they can find out from Progress Reports and Quality Reviews how well schools are helping students learn. Teachers and principals also have more information about students' strengths and weaknesses so they can make more informed decisions tailored to students' individual needs.
- **Partnering with parents** – Each school has a parent coordinator responsible for helping families. They also have access to District Family Advocates who can answer their questions. We also provide support to the City's parent leadership organizations, and we've made parent voices central to evaluating schools through the Learning Environment Survey.

Keep the Progress Going

Six years after the Mayor and the Chancellor launched the reforms, students are succeeding in New York City like never before. More students are meeting and exceeding standards in math and reading, the graduation rate is the highest it's been in decades, and the achievement gap separating African-American students from white and Asian students is narrowing. In the years ahead, we are working to build on and accelerate this progress.