



ENSURING STUDENT SUCCESS

Independent Sector Higher Education Budget Priorities FY 2025

The Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU) represents more than 100 independent colleges and universities across New York, and nearly 500,000 students, more than half of which are New Yorkers. Our members award 58 percent of education degrees, 61 percent of STEM degrees, and two-thirds of nursing degrees. Supporting these institutions and students is a critical investment in the state's economy, future workforce, and ability to remain competitive.

OPPORTUNITY AND EQUITY

Student aid and opportunity programs open the doors to higher education for all students. By investing in proven programs, New York State can ensure access to quality higher education for all students, particularly those from historically marginalized communities and those disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Invest in Education Opportunity Programs (\$22.2M)

New York's nation-leading education opportunity programs protect diversity on campus and increase college access for students from underrepresented groups. These programs need additional investment to continue to provide high-quality services to students and meet increasing demand. These investments will also help New York mitigate the harmful effects of the Supreme Court decision banning Affirmative Action in college admissions.

- Increase funding from FY24 levels by 20% (\$22.2M)
 - Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) (\$9.7M)
 - Science Technology Entry Program (STEP) and its collegiate counterpart (CSTEP) (\$7.6M)
 - Liberty Partnership Program (LPP) (\$5M)

Stand Up for Student Aid (\$210M)

2024 marks the 50th anniversary of New York's signature student aid program, the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). TAP has already helped more than 6 million New Yorkers earn a post-secondary degree by making college more affordable. Expanding the program will ensure that the state continues to produce the skilled workforce that New York's businesses require to remain competitive.

- Pass A.1889/S.3474 to increase the TAP income limit to \$110,000 and bring thousands of New Yorkers into the program (\$7M)
- Increase the maximum TAP award from \$5,665 to \$7,070 to reflect the changing needs of students and families (\$112M)



- Pass A.8089/S.7931 to increase the minimum award from \$500 to \$1,000 to provide students with meaningful support (\$19M)
- Pass A.8432 to provide independent students with full TAP benefits. These students are typically working and often support families while attending college and need full state support to be successful. (\$4M)
- Restore Grad TAP for students in critically needed fields: healthcare, education and STEM. Doing this will ensure that the state continues to produce the skilled workforce that New York's businesses need to remain competitive. (\$68M)

Increase FAFSA Completion (\$500K)

Each year New Yorkers leave behind hundreds of millions in unclaimed federal student aid. New York should prioritize FAFSA completion to maximize federal student aid coming to New Yorkers and ensure all students are aware of the aid they are entitled to receive.

- Pass A.1164/S.1983 to help students file the FAFSA and bring millions in federal student aid to New York (\$500K)

Invest in Bundy Aid to Support Students and Campuses (\$10M)

Bundy Aid provides student aid and funds academic support programs like tutoring, summer bridge programs, and support for students with disabilities. New York's 100+ independent colleges and universities enroll 40 percent of college students in the state, generate \$95 billion in annual economic impact, employ 185,000 people, and produce nearly 135,000 degrees annually.

- Despite the positive impact of the Independent Sector, New York State has invested only \$35 million per year in operating aid (Bundy Aid) for independent colleges. This is just 18 percent of the total authorized by statute. While the state has significantly increased operating aid for the public sector over the last several years and given all that the independent sector contributes to New York's economy, it is imperative that New York's private colleges receive the support necessary to ensure that higher education ecosystem in New York remains competitive.

Support Student Wellbeing (\$21M)

Enhancing support and services for student wellbeing to ensure all students have the resources they need to succeed in college is a high priority. This fund would provide support for all New York college students, whether they attend public or independent institutions.

- Increase funding for Students with Disabilities to \$15 million from \$4 million to strengthen access and support emerging student mental health needs. (\$11M)
- Pass A.2645/S.2913, the Hunger-Free Campus Act, to provide campuses with funding and structure to help college students facing food insecurity. (\$10M)

PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONGER CAMPUSES AND COMMUNITIES

New York's independent colleges stand ready as collaborative partners to help develop solutions. The state should strengthen its partnership with colleges and universities by investing in critical programs to provide capital and R&D funding. The innovations developed on college campuses have the potential to inform decisions around protecting our environment, growing economic



opportunities, and improving quality of life issues. The next generation of problem-solvers and innovators are on college campuses today, but they need the state's support.

Back to Basics: Improve Reading Proficiency (\$10M)

The Independent Sector supports Governor Hochul's "Back to Basics" plan to improve reading proficiency in New York. Independent sector colleges and universities graduate the majority of New York's future teachers. Any initiative to improve teacher preparation should also include independent colleges and universities.

Invest in Research to Build the Economy of Tomorrow (\$54M)

New York can solidify its position as a national leader in higher education R&D by expanding partnerships with its world-class research universities to bring jobs of the future and millions in federal funding to communities across the state. Programs like the Centers for Advanced Technology (CATs), and Centers of Excellence (COEs), and the NYSTAR Matching Grants Leverage Program provide partnership and support that pay tremendous dividends for our state.

- Increase funding for Centers for Advanced Technology (CATs) and Centers of Excellence (COEs) to \$1.25 million per center (\$10.67M)
- Invest \$20 million in the NYSTAR Matching Grants Leverage Program to bring hundreds of millions in federal research grants to New York campuses (\$20M)
- Invest \$20 million in Faculty Development Grants to recruit and retain the best and brightest in New York (\$20M)
- Support NOVELny to ensure that New Yorkers and students have access to reliable research, reference materials and databases free of charge using a public library card, school or academic library, or via geolocation on the NOVELny website (\$3M)

Establish Empire AI Consortium to Drive Research and Innovation (\$275M)

New York has the second most productive higher education R&D sector in the nation. The state should leverage that capacity through innovative partnerships like the Empire AI consortium to promote responsible research and development, create jobs, and unlock AI opportunities.

Support Higher Education Capital (HECap) Funding (\$40M)

The HECap Program spurs investment and jobs in communities across the state while strengthening our state's higher education infrastructure.

- Fund an additional round of HECap funding to support prevailing-wage jobs and build educational infrastructure across the state (\$40M)

Maximize the Impact of Recently Signed Nursing Simulation Law (\$24.5M)

Gov. Hochul signed legislation in May 2023 that enables colleges to expand the use of simulation-based learning in their nursing programs to graduate critically needed nurses. Providing capital support to these programs will allow them to invest in simulation-based learning technology.

- Provide matching grants for public and independent nursing programs in the state to support the capital investments required to take advantage of simulation technology (\$24.5M)