

Public Comment Timeline

June 4th – June 16th	Five borough-wide public hearings were conducted. The full schedule of these hearings can be found here https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/financial/contracts-for-excellence
June 4th – July 8th	33 public hearings were held. The full schedule of these hearings can be found here https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/financial/contracts-for-excellence
July 8th, 2025	Public comment period concluded.

Overview of Public Comment Period

Between June 4th and June 16th the New York City Department of Education held five virtual public hearings to discuss its proposed 2025-26 Contracts for Excellence Plan. In addition, between June 4th and July 8th, public hearings were held in each of the 32 Community School Districts and the Citywide Council on High Schools. During these hearings and for the duration of the public comment period, the public was given the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed plan.

The New York City Department of Education thanks all parents, caregivers, community members, superintendents, school employees and Community Education Council (CEC) members who took the time to participate in the 2025-2026 Contracts for Excellence public engagement process.

Summary of Questions, Comments and Concerns

Topic	C4E Programs
<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Concern about adequate outreach to families notifying them of the hearings
DOE Response	DOE emailed notice of the commencement of the Contracts for Excellence public process with principals, Community Education

	Councils, and City and State elected officials. Public notice was also posted on the DOE’s website and on Chalkbeat.
Topic	5 Year Class size Reduction Plan
<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Need for a Multi-Year Plan and Additional Detail: In some hearings and written comments, public commenters advocated for the development of a multi-year plan and for additional detail in the plan.
DOE Response	DOE continues to work with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the Council for School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA) to develop detailed annual Class Size Reduction plans. Much of the work to reduce class size occurs well in advance of the plan release to align with school timelines. NYCPS will take this feedback into consideration as we continue work to develop class size reduction plans for the 26-27 and 27-28 school years. Given the substantial funding and staffing changes required by the law, NYCPS is also looking to learn from each year of implementation and feedback from schools to inform future planning.
<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Enrollment Capping: Several commenters stated their desire for DOE to use enrollment caps to reduce class sizes. Commenters also suggested balancing enrollment across underutilized schools, and moving Pre-K and 3-K programs out of district schools to secure additional space.
DOE Response	As indicated in the draft plan, in SY 2025-26, capping school enrollment is not a necessary or preferred strategy to meet class size requirements. Principals may make minor changes to enrollment but may not limit student enrollment in order to meet the class size targets. The overall benchmark for the 25-26 school

	year is 60%, which DOE believes will be met through new hiring, reprogramming, and other strategies available to schools without limiting incoming enrollment. The school-driven planning process allows schools to design their own approach to improving the percentage of classes below the newly mandated caps, without reducing access to school programming or reducing enrollment. As a result of this process, NYCPS has allocated over \$400 million dollars to schools to hire an additional 3700 teachers and 100 APs to approximately 750 schools to reduce class sizes. The law also provides for exemptions which require negotiation with both UFT and the CSA.
<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Inadequate Funding and Application Process: Several commenters expressed that the funding provided to schools is insufficient or does not reach all schools that need it. They noted that the current application process is not working for schools without additional space, and that budget constraints are forcing some schools to consolidate classes, directly contradicting class size mandates.
DOE Response	NYCPS recognizes that not all schools that applied received funding; however, all schools had the option to develop and submit a plan regardless of whether or not they had space to fully comply. These proposals resulted in over \$400 million of additional funding allocated to approximately 750 schools to hire an additional 3700 teachers and 100 APs. NYCPS continues to work to fund schools in alignment with the Class Size law’s requirement, with the benchmark for the 25-26 school year being 60%. This is on top of substantial additional investments in school budgets for this current year and next year already, including: in FY 2025, \$182

	million in baselined for Contracts for Excellence and Class Size, \$1 billion in baselined additional funds in FY 2025 to support costs previously supported by federal stimulus, growth in FSF and the new FSF weights, and over \$225 million in Hold Harmless funds (distributed beginning of year and mid-year); in FY 2026, schools have received over \$130 in Hold Harmless funds.
<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Space Constraints and Overcrowding: A major barrier identified by multiple speakers and public comments is the lack of adequate classroom space in many schools, including in Queens. Attendees and commenters raised concerns about the pace of new school construction. Concerns were also raised about the School Construction Authority’s (SCA) estimated need for 75,000 seats and cuts to construction funding.
DOE Response	DOE continues to work closely with the SCA to identify sites. Since the publication of the original FY2025-2029 Five Year Capital Plan, the SCA has launched an aggressive effort to site seats as quickly as possible citywide. SCA has been working to expand opportunities to create seats, including site acquisition, leases, mixed-use buildings, and room conversions. As of the February 2025 Amendment, nearly one third of the 33,400 funded seats have been sited. Since then, one additional site at 1631-1659 Zerega in Bronx has been authorized to move forward. The project will provide 547 seats on elementary school level in District 11. Additionally, projects to add seats have been approved at two schools: I.S. 228 in Brooklyn and Queens HS for Information Research & Technology in Queens to provide a total of 118 seats. Over 50 sites have been evaluated and 30 room conversion projects are being assessed for feasibility. SCA anticipates siting more projects in the upcoming Amendment.

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2025 – 2026 Assessment of Contracts for Excellence Public Comment

<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Exemptions: Some commenters were concerned with the exemptions proposed in the draft class size plan.
DOE response	DOE, UFT, and CSA have published revised exemption criteria in the final plan.
<i>Substance of Comments</i>	Class Size at PS889 in Brooklyn: Multiple parents from PS 889 expressed concern that their school’s plan was not approved for funding, resulting in consolidation from three second-grade sections to just two.
DOE Response	DOE is actively working with the superintendent to support the school in considering the range of available funding to support implementation of the law. More information about resources available to schools to further reduce class size in the 26-27 school year will be available in the coming months.