

New York City Public Schools Accessibility Progress Report 2025-2026 - New York City Local Law 12 of 2023

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General

New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) aims to expand access to high-quality, equitable, and innovative schools for students, staff, and families across the city. With approximately 880,000 students, NYCPS is the largest school system in the country. Promoting student success requires collaboration across intra-agency divisions and offices to support more than 1,850 schools and programs. Given the diverse needs of its student population, NYCPS has created a comprehensive network of structures and systems to support all learners, including students with disabilities.

Accessibility Plan and Progress Report

Pursuant to New York City Local Law 12 of 2023, in consultation with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD), NYCPS developed a five-year accessibility plan for 2024-2028, which was published in March 2024. In further compliance with New York City Local Law 12 of 2023, this report is NYCPS's second annual progress report. Over the past year, NYCPS has made significant strides in enhancing accessibility, including ongoing projects to improve physical, digital, programmatic, and effective communications for people with disabilities. NYCPS remains committed to expanding access for and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the coming years.

The Office of Accessibility Planning (OAP) is responsible for preparing this progress report pursuant to New York City Local Law 12 of 2023.

Statement of Commitment

NYCPS is committed to ensuring that its programs, services, and activities are accessible to students, members of the school community, staff, and family members. In addition, NYCPS strives to create a transparent process for individuals to understand the accessibility of its schools and buildings and to request reasonable accommodations.

Disability Service Facilitator and Other Key Accessibility Information

- Disability Service Facilitator William Herrera



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Phone Number: (718) 935-2959
Email: accessibility@schools.nyc.gov

- For information about building accessibility, please visit: [Building Accessibility](#)
- For information about NYCPS’s anti-discrimination policy and procedures for filing internal complaints of discrimination, please visit: [Anti-discrimination Policy and Procedures for Filing Internal Complaints of Discrimination](#)

Feedback Process

Feedback is welcome on the NYCPS five-year accessibility plan for 2024-2028, the Local Law 12 Accessibility Progress Report 2024-2025, and this Accessibility Progress Report 2025-2026.

Please email LocalLaw12@schools.nyc.gov to share any feedback.

Physical Access

Advancing capital construction is an integral part of NYCPS’s commitment to continuing to enhance accessibility across its buildings. The NYCPS capital plan for fiscal years 2025-2029 allocates \$800 million to accessibility capital projects. This investment demonstrates NYCPS’s ongoing commitment to improve the accessibility of school buildings to support the diverse needs of its students, staff, and visitors.

Developments since May 2025

- Since April 2024, NYCPS has worked with disability advocacy groups towards meeting the two following goals for the 2025–2029 capital plan: to increase the number of fully accessible primary school buildings from 33% to 40% across all districts; and to ensure that at least 75% of District 75 buildings are partially or fully accessible and that at least half are fully accessible in every district. To support these

goals, the Accessibility Sub-Committee (ASC) has approved 16 capital accessibility projects totaling an expenditure of 53% of the funding for the 2025-2029 capital plan.

- OAP conducted building surveys, generating over 100 Building Accessibility Profiles (BAPs). These efforts included surveying 50% of primary non-accessible buildings across all school districts. The resulting BAPs data have played a critical role in informing and prioritizing future accessibility remediation efforts.
- In collaboration with Vertical Transportation Services (VTS), OAP launched a lift-upgrade program in November 2025 to replace outdated or inoperative lifts in school buildings. The program involves the prioritization of buildings based on need, the removal of defective equipment, and the installation of new lifts with improved functionality and safety features.

Goals by May 2027

- In partnership with ASC, NYCPS will continue approving additional projects, with expenditures on building accessibility projected to increase from 53% to 65% of the 2025–2029 capital plan.
- OAP will continue conducting BAP surveys for 50% to 75% of primary non-accessible buildings across all school districts. The results of these surveys will guide future remediation efforts.
- In collaboration with VTS, OAP will continue prioritizing and implementing lift upgrades across school buildings, replacing lifts based on assessed priority and need to improve accessibility.

Digital Access

NYCPS is committed to ensuring that its digital content is accessible to individuals with disabilities and continually improving the user experience for everyone by applying the relevant accessibility standards.

Developments since May 2025

- In November 2025, NYCPS appointed a Digital Inclusion Officer (DIO) to strengthen and coordinate accessibility and inclusion efforts across the organization.

- A Digital Accessibility Specialist supported accessibility compliance across NYCPS public-facing communications, with an increased focus on family-facing resources and high-traffic content.
- The Division of Instructional and Information Technology (DIIT) continued to develop and promote the Accessibility Development Guide, providing developers across NYCPS with guidance for building accessible software.
- DIIT expanded collaboration with MOPD to support accessibility testing of major NYCPS platforms.
- DIIT conducted design review and joint application development sessions with application development teams, emphasizing the importance of accessibility concerns in the design and development phases of software development.
- In collaboration with MOPD, DIIT refined requests for proposal requirements ensuring that vendor products comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA, the most recent WCAG update, and are fully navigable using only the keyboard.
- The office of External Communications refined its internal review process to ensure that public-facing materials comply with WCAG 2.2 AA and provided general support and resources to the Office of Communications to ensure that public-facing materials are accessible.

Goals by May 2027

- The DIO will partner with offices across NYCPS to increase awareness of accessibility requirements and promote a shared understanding that accessibility is a core responsibility that benefits all users. This work will include advancing the use of plain language as a key accessibility practice, helping ensure that digital content is clear, understandable, and usable for families, students, and staff with diverse needs and abilities.
- DIIT will strengthen digital accessibility by expanding online accessibility training opportunities for developers, tracking participation and completion, and offering ongoing learning and support.

- DIIT will continue to advance a user-centered, accessibility-first approach across digital products and services, with a focus on sustainability, compliance, and improved experiences for students, families, and staff.

Programmatic Access

NYCPS works diligently to both reduce obstacles and provide essential resources to all students, including those with disabilities, to access their educational programs.

Developments since May 2025

- As part of its InclusiveSchoolsNYC initiative, NYCPS expanded support to middle schools and high schools, growing the citywide network of more than 90 schools offering community events, programming, resources, and student-led clubs that celebrate the identities of students with disabilities and foster a culture of belonging and community.
- Through a partnership between the Division of Inclusive and Accessible Learning (DIAL) and the Office of Student Pathways, NYCPS utilized Perkins funding to provide individualized and small group training for instructors in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. CTE programs provide specialized curricula that blend rigorous academics with in-demand technical skills, preparing students for post-secondary education and careers.
- FutureReadyNYC—a multi-year initiative developed with the New York City Jobs Council and CareerWise New York—expanded its reach to nearly 180 schools. The program provides training and work-based learning experiences in high-demand fields such as healthcare, business, technology, and education.
- In November 2025, in partnership with the Transition Alliance and the City University of New York, DIAL launched the first Citywide Transition Summit, a citywide event at John Jay College to assist students with disabilities and their families to prepare for life after high school. Attended by more than 1000 families and 70 agencies, the

event included workshop sessions, individual consultancies with NYCPS and partner agencies, and a resource fair.

- In July 2025, the District 75 Office of Travel Training launched the [*Student Safety & Independence Training Program for Families*](#), a pilot program designed to help families prepare their children for confident use of public transportation and pedestrian routes, strengthening both safety and independence.
- NYCPS expanded several specialized autism programs - Nest, Horizon, and AIMS - that build academic, communication, and social skills by adding 37 new classrooms for the 2025-2026 school year. As of September 2025, there were 90 Nest programs, 77 Horizon programs, and 36 AIMS programs citywide. The Nest program offers integrated co-teaching classrooms with both a general and special education teacher. The Horizon program provides a smaller, highly structured setting capped at eight students with dedicated staff support. The AIMS program is an elementary program for six learners who receive intensive support to build learning readiness, language, communication, daily living, and behavior skills. These programs continue to demonstrate strong outcomes, with the Nest and Horizon programs maintaining a 97% high school graduation rate among participants.

Goals by May 2027

- DIAL aims to approximately double student registration capacity for the upcoming Inclusive Education Student Summit on May 15, 2026, an annual event that brings together students with and without disabilities to gain new perspectives about disability rights, deepen thinking on accessibility, and create positive change through hands-on activism.
- NYCPS is working to increase the rate of participation of students with disabilities in programs that prepare students for college and careers as well as work-based learning programs. Students participate in learning in the workplace or through paid internships (such as the Career Readiness and Modern Youth Apprenticeship, the FutureReadyNYC programs, the Transition Opportunities Program, and the Summer Youth Employment Program).

- NYCPS aims to expand audiological testing access by installing new audiological booths to strengthen systemwide capacity to provide timely hearing assessments, reduce delays in referrals, and ensure consistent, high quality audiological services for students. This anticipated expansion supports NYCPS's broader commitment to equitable access and ensures that all students receive the evaluations and services necessary to fully participate in their educational programs.

Effective Communications

NYCPS supports effective communication for individuals with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities by providing assistive technology equipment and services to support communication with teachers and peers, completion of schoolwork, and participation in school programs and activities. Furthermore, NYCPS establishes policies, guidelines, and training programs that enhance accessibility awareness among staff and foster disability-inclusive communication practices.

Developments since May 2025

- The Central Assistive Technology Team expanded the use of the Read&Write software—a digital accessibility toolbar featuring tools such as speech-to-text, text-to-speech, word prediction, visual dictionary, and translation in more than 90 languages—by selecting model schools to train other participating schools with support from student ambassadors. More than 150,000 students and 9,000 staff currently use the Read&Write software.

Goals by May 2027

- The Central Assistive Technology Team intends to launch a training on disability-inclusive communication offering asynchronous training modules and scenario-based learning opportunities for school staff and central teams.
- NYCPS will install additional communication boards to support non-verbal students. Custom communication boards will be installed in 30 school buildings citywide, portraying letters, numbers, and program-

specific icons with corresponding labels as a guide to facilitate communication between students with disabilities, their peers, and staff members.

- NYCPS will endeavor, where practicable, to apply the print accessibility guidelines that will be issued pursuant to Local Law 187 of 2025.

Workplace Inclusion

NYCPS is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals with disabilities, and fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment in which individual differences are respected and recognized as a source of strength that enriches the agency.

Developments since May 2025

- The Division of Human Resources has a monthly newsletter for all employees. To continue to promote greater awareness and support for workplace accessibility, the Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA) issues monthly newsletters to all employees informing them about the accommodation process, including how employees can request accommodations, as well as any changes in applicable policies.
- In May 2025, ODA released an updated personnel memorandum concerning accommodations, including several updates to applicable laws and processes regarding accommodations, including new provisions specific to the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.
- ODA provided a comprehensive and focused training to supervisors who encounter reasonable accommodation requests for employees and applicants of the NYCPS. This training focused on educating supervisors about recent changes in federal and local law related to pregnancy and lactation accommodations.
- NYCPS appointed two Employee Relations Compliance Associates to support compliance with internal deadlines, and federal, state and local regulations concerning accommodations.

Goals by May 2027

- ODA will continue to publish notices about accommodations to both employees and supervisors. Not only will ODA continue to use the monthly newsletter, but bi-annually, ODA will publish a notice in the weekly newsletters sent to principals and superintendents. These publications will continue to ensure consistent communication and ongoing advocacy for accessibility.

Consultations and Feedback

Before the publication of the five-year accessibility plan for 2024-2028, a proposed plan was first published on the NYCPS website in December 2023, inviting public comments. Additionally, MOPD posted the proposed plan and a notice of the opportunity to comment on the New York City Agency Accessibility Plans website.

NYCPS actively collaborates with disability advocacy organizations to develop capital planning goals and policies to support individuals with disabilities. The agency maintains ongoing meetings with these organizations, ensuring that their valuable feedback strengthens agency plans.

Conclusion

NYCPS is unwavering in its commitment to making its programs, services, and activities accessible to staff, students, families, and community members. This progress report demonstrates that NYCPS is actively advancing a broad set of processes in support of individuals with disabilities, continuing the elimination of barriers to accessibility and fostering an inclusive environment.