

Class Size Reduction in NYC Schools
Testimony before the NYC Council Education Committee
By Curtis D. Young

October 27, 2021

Mr. Chair and Members of Committee,

I come before you today in support of **Intro Bill 2374** requiring the Department of Education to phase in smaller classes within the next three years by shrinking the **legally allowed** classroom capacity. As an advocate of smaller class sizes across our city, I see this legislation as a significant step in our long term advocacy efforts.

Today I am speaking to you as Executive Director of Artistic Noise. Our work, ranging from Harlem-based community settings to detention facilities, supports the positive reentry for youth and also provides **preventive** care for those in need. One reason I continuously champion this issue is due to the intersection this issue has with the school to prison pipeline, as I mentioned in my testimony on February 28, 2021. In a time where racial justice and criminal justice reform is at the forefront of all our minds, we must begin to call out what large classes actually are - an injustice to **ALL** students, specifically to those coming from under-resourced communities.

It remains a fact that:

- 1. Class size reduction improves test scores for students of color and significantly narrows the achievement gap.**
- 2. Class size reduction leads to increases in college entrance and other postsecondary outcomes for students of color.**
- 3. Class-size reduction has non-cognitive and disciplinary impacts that are likely to benefit Black males and other students of color.**

If we are serious about closing ALL school to prison pipelines, we absolutely must have class size reductions at the forefront of our policy decisions.

Students from - *already* - underserved communities arrive to their classrooms with existing challenges, traumas, and a variety of socio-emotional needs.

Smaller class size is not the panacea for improved outcomes for each student, however, what we do know for sure is that when coupled with adequate staffing, counselors and behavioral specialists, **and** a smaller class size, we can provide the individual support our students need during these challenging times.

Thank you for your time.