



Testimony of Reinvent Albany for the Joint Legislative Hearing On Elementary and Secondary Education

January 29, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on budget issues related to elementary and secondary education. Reinvent Albany advocates for open, accountable New York government.

Today, we are speaking to two education issues:

- 1. Give NYC permanent control over its own schools**
- 2. Prohibit IDAs from abating tax revenue meant for schools**

First, we urge the Senate and Assembly to give NYC permanent control over its own schools. The current system, wherein the state uses the pending expiration of mayoral control to extract concessions from the City, does not respect basic principles of home rule, and is an intrusive overreach of state authority. NYC has [42% of the state's population](#), pays 53% of all taxes, and has a sophisticated and highly representative City Council. The City of New York should have the authority to determine how to govern itself and its school system – not the state.

Second, please include [S132 \(Ryan\)](#) in your one-house budgets, which prohibits Industrial Development Agencies from abating the portion of property tax revenue that would go to schools. National subsidy watchdog Good Jobs First estimates that IDAs and other economic development entities diverted [\\$1.8 billion in potential tax revenue from New York schools in 2021 alone](#). Parents and teachers have no way of stopping IDAs from reducing school revenue. It's time for the Legislature to end the practice.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Tom Speaker, Legislative Director, at tom [at] reinventalbany.org.