

# 2026-2027 SUNY BUDGET REQUEST



Thanks to the leadership of Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and members of the New York State Legislature, SUNY is on the move! Students, faculty, and staff of the State University of New York have benefited from historic levels of investment over the last three state budget cycles. Sustained investment from the State has resulted in **three consecutive years of enrollment growth across all sectors** for the first time since 2007-2009. The SUNY Board of Trustees and SUNY Chancellor John B. King Jr. are grateful for this unprecedented level of support as they continue to increase enrollment and advance four pillars to guide SUNY's progress: student success; research and scholarship; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and economic development and upward mobility.

**Governor Hochul's Executive Budget proposal provides a strong foundation to continue this momentum and to ensure another historic budget for the SUNY System.**

## OPERATING AID REQUESTS

### Support the Executive's Increase in State Operating Aid: \$54 million

The 2026-27 Executive Budget provides \$54 million in additional funding to maintain the SUNY tuition freeze for resident undergraduate students at State-operated campuses. SUNY will need additional operating aid to cover the costs of any new collective bargaining agreements negotiated by the State.

### Support the Expansion of SUNY Reconnect: \$8.5 million

The 2026-27 Executive Budget expands the highly successful free community college program enacted in last year's budget to eligible adult learners preparing for careers in logistics, air traffic control and transportation, and emergency management, as well as to make it easier for adult learners to return to college to pursue nursing if they already have a prior degree.

### Support the 100 Percent Community College Funding Floor

The 2026-27 Executive Budget maintains a 100 percent Community College funding floor, which avoids a reduction in Direct State Tax Support of approximately \$65 million.

### Support the ASAP and ACE Expansion: \$8 million

The 2026-27 Executive Budget includes \$8 million for SUNY to sustain and continue to expand ASAP and ACE, the nation's leading student success initiative that is already improving retention and credit attainment across 34 SUNY campuses. This funding will allow the program to grow from over 7,000 students to 10,000 students by Fall 2026.

### Support the Empire State Service Corps Expansion: \$2.8 million

The Empire State Service Corps offers SUNY students the opportunity to engage in 300 hours of paid public service over an academic year. Currently, 500 students are engaged in work such as K-12 tutoring, SNAP and basic needs outreach, mental health education, sustainability efforts, anti-hate and bias prevention, civic engagement, veteran support, and FAFSA completion. Over the first two years of the program, nearly four students have applied for each available slot. The 2026-27 Executive Budget includes these funds as part of the important New York Career Connect Initiative.

### Support Emergency Aid for Students: \$600,000

The 2026-27 Executive Budget includes \$600,000 for SUNY to create emergency aid funds for students to assist with unexpected expenses related to housing, food insecurity, transportation, and medical emergencies.

## CAPITAL REQUESTS

### Support the Community College Local Sponsor Investment

The 2026-27 Executive Budget includes \$128.1 million for Community College capital, matching —up to 50 percent— local sponsor approved projects.

### Support Capital Investments for Critical Maintenance at State-Operated Campuses

The 2026-27 Executive Budget provides \$595 million in critical maintenance funding at State-operated campuses and statutory colleges. The State-operated campuses across the SUNY system now face a backlog of nearly \$10 billion. This increase in critical maintenance capital funding is vital to maintaining current infrastructure which is critical to campus operations.

## HOSPITAL REQUESTS

### Permanently End the Hospital Debt Sweep

For the past four years, the State has not “swept” patient revenues from the three SUNY hospitals back to the General Fund to reimburse the cost of servicing this debt. This has provided much-needed relief and support and is consistent with how this type of indirect benefit from the State is provided to our academic campuses. SUNY requests that the State make this debt service relief permanent, allowing the three SUNY hospitals (Upstate, Downstate, and Stony Brook) to continue to use these funds for operations and include the Jacobs School of Medicine at the University at Buffalo.

### Support SUNY Downstate and Upstate Medical

The 2026-27 Executive Budget reappropriates \$750 million in capital funding for SUNY Downstate to develop a sustainable future for the hospital as part of a \$1.1 billion modernization plan recommended by the Downstate Community Advisory Board and advanced by the Governor. The budget also allocates an additional \$100 million to cover SUNY Downstate’s hospital operating deficit for a third year during this transition.

The Executive Budget also reappropriates \$450 million in capital funding for Upstate Medical to construct a new hospital annex.

### Support SUNY Hospital Infrastructure Maintenance

The 2026-27 Executive Budget includes \$50 million in capital for each of the three SUNY hospitals for critical infrastructure maintenance.

## RESTORATION OF SUNY PROGRAMS AND OTHER AREAS FOR THE LEGISLATURE TO LEAD ON

The 2026-27 Executive Budget lays a strong foundation for public higher education and continues investment in key priorities for SUNY. In line with requests made in the SUNY Board of Trustees Request for Operating and Capital Support from the State, SUNY respectfully requests the following restorations and adds:

### Increase Critical Maintenance, Emergency Avoidance, and Research Capital Funding: Add \$405 million for critical maintenance and emergency avoidance and \$460 million for research capital investment

While the increase proposed in the Executive Budget will result in additional critical maintenance funding for SUNY state-operated campuses, there remains a \$10 billion backlog of deferred critical maintenance throughout the SUNY system. As the System ages and buildings require increased maintenance or outright replacement, the capital needs of the system – including the importance of security upgrades – need to be addressed to ensure SUNY’s four pillars and recent enrollment gains are not inhibited by facilities.

Additionally, the FY26 enacted budget included \$460 million in funding to construct new world-class research facilities that will assist in the Governor’s goal of seeing SUNY’s research expenditures double over the next decade. The state’s investment in these facilities allows campuses to attract leaders in research fields and with them, more federal and other funds to conduct life-saving research across the SUNY system.

SUNY’s Board of Trustees’ budget request to the State emphasized the need for both increased capital funding as well as a multi-year capital plan that will allow for greater predictability in year-over-year capital funding. This certainty will allow the SUNY Construction Fund and SUNY campuses to more efficiently plan and spend capital dollars to address deferred and emerging needs.

### Restore and Invest in Educational Opportunity Program (EOP): Restore \$2.6 million and add \$17.5 million

For nearly sixty years, EOP has served as New York State’s most effective higher education access and completion engine for low-income, academically underprepared, and first-generation students. In recent years, EOP enrollment has increased by 21 percent while State funding has grown by only 3 percent. This has led to a strain on the program’s resources that is projected to continue into future years.

### Invest in Community College Operating Aid: \$8 million

The last two enacted budgets included \$8 million each in increased targeted operating aid for community colleges, the first time there has been a back-to-back increase in direct support for community colleges in decades. This funding will again be used to continue to support the expansion of high-demand workforce programs in fields including advanced manufacturing; green jobs; healthcare; and cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and information technology.

### Expand the Higher Education in Prison Program: \$3 million

Approximately 20 SUNY institutions provide educational services to 29 State prisons and one federal facility. Education in prison reduces recidivism rates by over 40 percent for participants and reduces violence in facilities. The \$3 million funding request would support the development of new programs and the expansion of academic re-entry supports for incarcerated students.

### Restore the Timbuctoo Climate Science Careers Summer Institute: Restore \$425,000 and add \$425,000

The 2026-27 Executive Budget includes \$1.25 million for the Timbuctoo Climate Science Careers Summer Institute. This program, which is centered at SUNY ESF, provides a multi-week session in the Adirondacks and Syracuse region for students from urban areas interested in an educational path to environmental science careers.

## IN ADDITION:

- › Restore \$350,000 for the SUNY Black Leadership Institute
- › Restore \$2 million for the Maritime Cadets Appointment Program
- › Restore \$350,000 for the Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Leadership Institute
- › Restore \$1 million for the High Needs Nursing Program
- › Restore \$1 million for Mental Health Services