

Educational Pathways Analysis



NYC → HBCU

February 2026

Enrollment Report

2021-2026

The Pipeline Between New York City and America's Historically Black Colleges

An in-depth analysis of educational pathways connecting the nation's largest school district with its most historic institutions



1.1M Students Annually

NYC Public Schools



4,000-5,500

Annual NYC Student HBCU Enrollment



REPORT STRUCTURE

01 SCALE & CONTEXT

NYC's 1.1 million K-12 student population represents a critical pipeline for HBCU enrollment, with demographic composition creating natural alignment with HBCU mission priorities.

 **1.1M Students**

02 KEY FINDINGS

Institutional partnerships, enrollment data, and the transformative launch of HBCU Early College Prep High School in Queens with 10:1 demand ratio.

 **1,000+ Applicants**

03 DEMOGRAPHICS

Racial and socioeconomic analysis revealing mission alignment between NYC's diverse student population and HBCU educational priorities.

 **83% BIPOC**

04 TEMPORAL TRENDS

2021-2026 enrollment patterns, post-2020 racial equity movement impact, and Supreme Court affirmative action decision effects.

 **+7% Growth**

05 COMPETATIVE LANDSCAPE

HBCU positioning against CUNY/SUNY dominance, private institutions, and out-of-state public universities in NYC graduate destination choices.

 **3,500-5,500 Annual**

06 FUTURE OUTLOOK

Expansion opportunities, policy implications, and projected enrollment trends through 2026 and beyond.

 **Moderate Growth**

NYC's CRITICAL PIPELINE POSITION

THE NATION'S LARGEST SCHOOL DISTRICT

1.1M

K-12 Students

65-70K

Annual Graduates

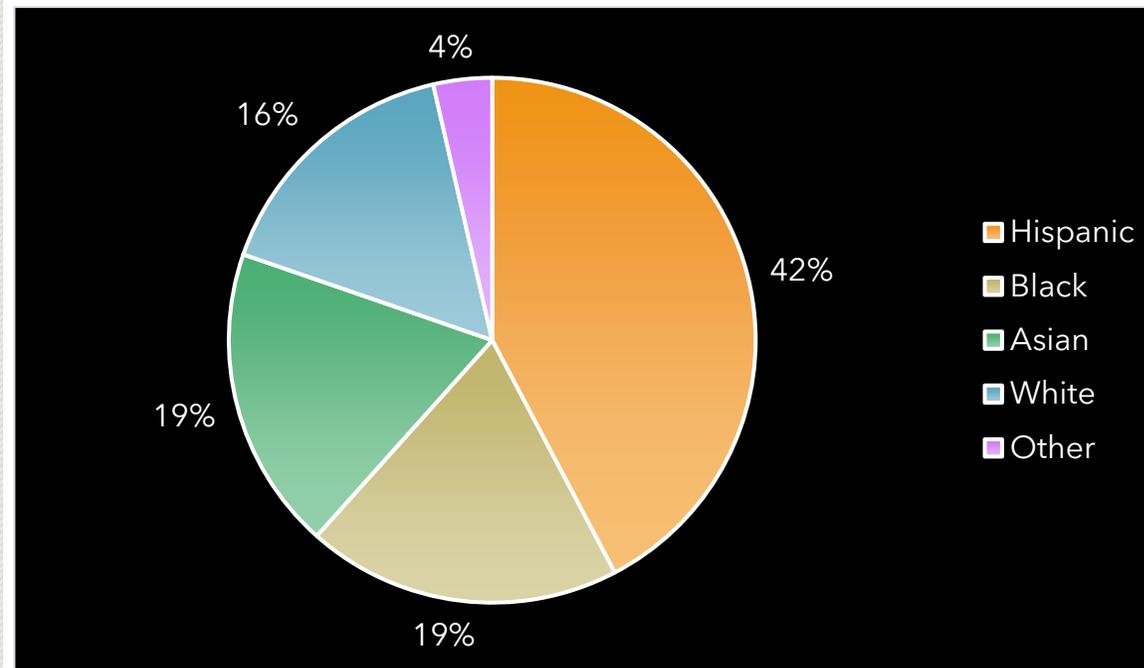
New York City represents one of the most significant yet systematically understudied source populations for Historically Black Colleges and Universities nationwide. The sheer scale creates extraordinary potential for HBCU enrollment.

"Each year, NYC public schools alone graduate **approximately** 65,000-70,000 students, with thousands additional from charter and private institutions, representing a substantial pool of potential HBCU enrollees."

DEMOGRAPHIC ALIGNMENT WITH HBCU MISSIONS

The demographic composition of NYC schools creates natural alignment with HBCU mission priorities. Extraordinary diversity positions the city as a potential feeder for HBCUs seeking academically prepared students from underrepresented backgrounds.

NYC PUBLIC SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS - 83% BIPOC



42.3%

Hispanic

19.3%

Black

18.7%

Asian

16.1%

White

CRITICAL DATA LIMITATIONS



FUNCTIONAL CONSTRAINTS

The most fundamental limitation governing this analysis is the **complete absence of citywide NYC Department of Education tracking of graduate college destinations by institution type**. The NYC DOE publishes extensive graduation and college readiness metrics but does not systematically disaggregate enrollment by HBCU status.

01

DIRECT INSTITUTIONAL REPORTING

Where HBCUs disclose geographic enrollment distributions, providing the most reliable data points.

Limitation: Non-random and may overstate concentration at documented institutions

02

PARTNERSHIP-DERIVED INFERENCE

From structured pipeline programs like Early College Prep, reflecting demand intensity.

Limitation: Reflects demand but not realized enrollment flows

03

DEMOGRAPHIC EXTRAPULATION

Applying national patterns to NYC-specific populations for estimation purposes.

Limitation: Assumes NYC students mirror national HBCU enrollee characteristics



HIGH QUALITY

DSU, Morehouse (direct reporting)



MODERATE QUALITY

Howard, Spelman (inferred data)



LOW QUALITY

Most other HBCUs (extrapolated)

HBCU EARLY COLLEGE PREP HIGH SCHOOL



SEPTEMBER 2025 LAUNCH

The most significant structural development in the 2021-2026 period is the **September 2025 launch of HBCU Early College Prep High School in Queens**, established through an exclusive partnership between NYC Public Schools and Delaware State University.

"To be clear, the greatest indicator for a lower-resourced student from an under-served community to actually get into the middle class and change the economic trajectory for themselves, their families, and their communities is their attendance at an HBCU."

– DSU President Tony Allen

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND PARTNERSHIPS

The HBCU Early College Prep represents the **first partnership between a historically Black college or university and a school district located in a state without an HBCU.**

Grades 9-11

DSU faculty provide professional development to NYC teachers

Junior Year+

Students transition to online instruction from DSU professors

10:1

DEMAND RATIO

1,000+ applicants for 100 seats

vs. 6.5:1 for NYC Specialized High Schools

DUAL-ENROLLMENT MODEL



Up to 64 College Credits

Associate degree in Liberal Arts



Tuition-Free Structure

Potential savings: \$20K-\$40K



Guaranteed Admission

Direct entitlement to DSU enrollment

SELECTION MECHANISM

- > Holistic review (essay, video)
- > Community awareness assessment
- > Academic record evaluation

KEY HBCU DESTINATIONS FOR NYC STUDENTS

DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY

30%
NYC-METRO

~1,987

NYC-Metro Students

6,623

Total Enrollment

+13.6%

Growth (2023-25)

DSU has maintained approximately 30% NYC-metro enrollment concentration through substantial growth, with NYC students as a primary growth driver.

MOREHOUSE COLLEGE

148

NY State Students

5.8%

of Enrollment

~111-140

NYC Estimated

The 5.8% New York State proportion substantially exceeds NYC's proportional share of national high school graduates (~2.5%), indicating successful market penetration.

TOP FEEDER STATES TO MOREHOUSE COLLEGE

Georgia:	665 (26.0%)	New York:	148 (5.8%)
Maryland:	132 (5.2%)	California:	121 (4.8%)

OTHER PROMINENT HBCUs

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

~400-800 NYC

~14,890 students • 37,000 applicants • First-year surge: 2,268 → 2,796

SPELMAN COLLEGE

NEON Partnership

~2,712 students • 700 new admits • #1 HBCU for 16 years • 12,000+ applications

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

+27% Growth

9,027 students • 27% growth since 2018 • Baltimore location (4 hours from NYC)

ADDITIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITH NYC OUTREACH

North Carolina A&T 15,275 students • Engineering recruitment

Hampton University 3,728 students • 17,000+ applications

Florida A&M University 7,890 students • STEM powerhouse

2026 HBCU SHOWCASE

NYC Armory • 20+ HBCU track & field programs



NYC-HBCU ENROLLMENT ESTIMATE

CENTRAL ESTIMATE WITH UNCERTAINTY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Given data limitations, aggregate NYC-HBCU enrollment requires transparent methodology with explicit uncertainty acknowledgment. Our central estimate suggests approximately **4,365 NYC high school graduates** enroll in HBCUs annually, representing **4.6%-7.4%** of total NYC graduates.

4,365
Central Estimate
Annual NYC-HBCU Enrollment

3,600

LOW ESTIMATE

- ↓ Conservative extrapolation from documented institutions
- ↓ Assumes limited reach beyond major HBCUs
- ↓ Represents 4.6% of NYC graduates

LOWER BOUND

4,365

CENTRAL ESTIMATE

- ✓ Triangulated from multiple data sources
- ✓ Accounts for enrollment growth trends
- ✓ Represents 5.8% of NYC graduates

MOST PROBABLE

5,830

HIGH ESTIMATE

- ↑ Includes inferred enrollment at moderate-quality data institutions
- ↑ Accounts for pipeline expansion effects
- ↑ Represents 7.4% of NYC graduates

UPPER BOUND

ANNUAL RANGE

3,500-5,500

DSU NYC CONCENTRATION

30%

HBCU EARLY COLLEGE PREP DEMAND

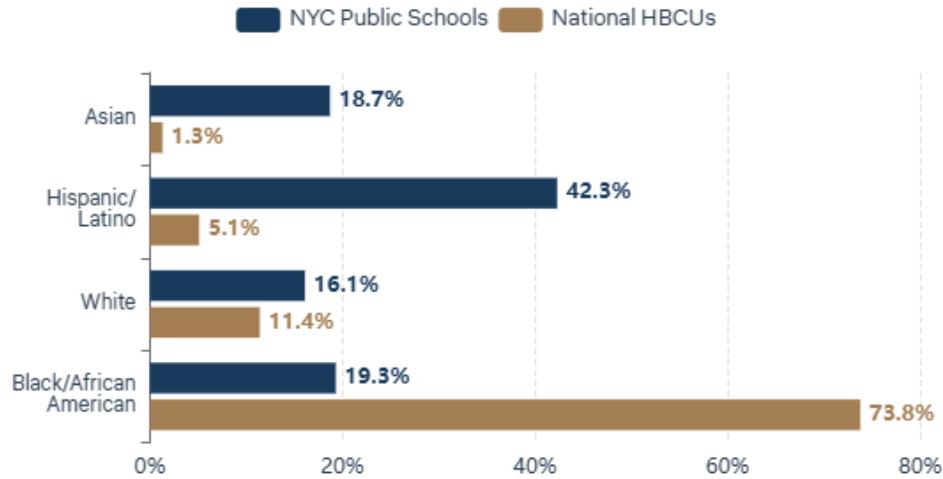
10:1

NYC ENROLLMENT AT DSU

~1,987

MISSION ALIGNMENT & POPULATION COMPOSITION

RACIAL & ETHNIC COMPOSITION COMPARISON



IMPLICATIONS OF HBCU MISSION ALIGNMENT

The historical mission of HBCUs—providing educational opportunity for Black students excluded from predominantly white institutions—resonates powerfully with NYC student experiences of persistent educational inequity.

"There's just not enough exposure to HBCUs across the country. We talk about college and college access, but we do not spend enough time celebrating the history and the data around it."

— Dr. Asya Johnson, Founding Principal

HISPANIC/LATINO STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

For Hispanic/Latino students—NYC's largest racial/ethnic group at **42.3%**—HBCU mission alignment is less historically grounded but potentially significant. Shared experiences of educational marginalization create functional alignment.

HBCU Early College Prep Inclusivity

“HBCUs, and our school, in particular, are not just for students who are Black”

“Anyone can attend an HBCU”

Signals intentional outreach beyond traditional Black student base

SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS



Low-Income Prevalence

~70% Pell Grant recipients at many HBCUs vs. 32% at non-HBCUs



NYC Economic Need

~75% of public school students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch



First-Generation Focus

Substantial portion of NYC-HBCU enrollees are first-generation college students

NATIONAL CONTEXT & NYC INDICATORS

+7%

ENROLLMENT GROWTH

2020-2023

+20%

SINGLE YEAR GROWTH

2022

287K

TOTAL HBCU STUDENTS

Fall 2021

72%

BLACK REPRESENTATION

National Average

Post-2020 Racial Equity Movement Impact

The **racial equity movement catalyzed by the May 2020 murder of George Floyd** created unprecedented visibility and interest in HBCUs. Students and families sought "inclusive and supportive environments" amid reports of racial hostility at predominantly white institutions.

APPLICATION SURGES



Morehouse:	+122% (2018-2023)
Howard:	+175% (2013-2023)
Hampton:	17,000+ applications

VISIBILITY FACTORS

- ★ VP Kamala Harris (Howard alum) + other prominent alum
- ★ Media attention elevation
- ★ Philanthropic investment surge

Supreme Court Affirmative Action Effects (2023)

The **June 2023 Supreme Court decisions** in Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard and SFFA v. UNC—prohibiting race-conscious admissions at predominantly white institutions—created complex effects on HBCU enrollment dynamics.

HBCU Administrators anticipated increases in applications as students seek race-conscious alternatives.

NYC-SPECIFIC TREND INDICATORS

- Extraordinary Demand**
HBCU Early College Prep: 10:1 selectivity
- Recruitment Intensification**
Multiple HBCUs expanding NYC outreach
- Charter Sector Growth**
+6% since 2022, creating more HBCU pathways

HBCU POSTIONING IN NYC GRADUATE DESINATIONS

NYC GRADUATE COLLEGE DESTINATIONS

The overwhelming majority of NYC high school graduates who enroll in college attend CUNY or SUNY institutions, reflecting financial accessibility, geographic convenience, and established pathways. CUNY's explicit mission of being a **"transformative engine of social mobility"** creates powerful retention pressure that HBCUs must overcome through non-price value propositions.

CUNY/SUNY DOMINANCE

~275,000

CUNY Enrollment

- ✓ Growth Rate: +3.8%
- ✓ Excelsior Scholarship: Free tuition <\$125K
- ✓ In-City Tuition: ~\$6,930

Primary Destination

PRIVATE NORTHEASTERN

\$35K-\$75K

Annual Cost Range

- 🎓 **Elite Research:** Columbia, NYU, Cornell
- 🎓 **Liberal Arts:** Barnard, Wesleyan
- 🎓 **Regional:** Fordham, Pace

Prestige Competition

OUT-OF-STATE PUBLIC

Regional Proximity

Cost & Access Advantage

- 🚗 **Neighboring:** UConn, Rutgers
- 🚗 **Mid-Atlantic:** UMD, Penn State
- 🚗 **Southern:** UNC, UVA

Direct HBCU Competition

HBCU COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Cultural Affinity

Majority-Black environments, faculty representation

Campus Climate

Higher sense of belonging, reduced stereotype threat

Alumni Networks

40-80% of Black professionals in key fields

Graduation Rates

40% more likely to graduate (UNCF data)

PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTION SHARE

Black Engineers

40%

Black Lawyers

50%

Black Doctors

50%

Black Judges

80%

EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS & EXPANSION

EXPANSION OF EARLY COLLEGE MODELS

Replication Potential

The HBCU Early College Prep model, if demonstrated successful, possesses substantial replication potential across NYC boroughs and with additional HBCU partners.

Brooklyn
2026-2028

Bronx
2027-2029

Queens II
2026-2027

"The structural elements—dual enrollment credit accumulation, guaranteed admission pathway, cultural programming integration—are transferable to additional HBCU partners and geographic locations."

ADDITIONAL HBCU-NYC PARTNERSHIPS

The DSU-NYC DOE precedent may catalyze competitive responses from other HBCUs seeking to establish pipeline programs.

Howard University

Flagship prestige, DC proximity

Selective early college

Spelman College

Women's excellence, STEM leadership

Single-sex model

Morgan State

Baltimore proximity (4 hours)

Transportation support

NC A&T

Scale (largest HBCU), engineering

Program pathways

POLICY & FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

Federal & State Support

- ✓ **American Rescue Plan:** Enhanced HBCU institutional capacity
- ✓ **Capital Finance Debt Relief:** Improved facilities and resources
- ✓ **NYS Aid Portability:** Excelsior Scholarship expansion discussions

NYC Municipal Investment

- ✓ **Early College Funding:** ~\$500K annually for HBCU Prep
- ✓ **Mayoral Support:** Adams' explicit prioritization
- ✓ **Chancellor Commitment:** Aviles-Ramos' "historic" framing

DEMOGRAPHIC & SOCIAL TREND PROJECTIONS

National Drivers

Racial Equity Movement	Sustained
Affirmative Action Effects	Moderate
Alumni Transmission	Strong

NYC-Specific Trends

Charter Sector Growth	+6%
Hispanic/Latino Share	42.3% ↑
Asian Population	18.7% ↑

CENTRAL PROJECTION

NYC-HBCU enrollment is likely to maintain current levels of **4,000-5,500 students annually**, with potential for moderate growth driven by pipeline expansion and demographic diversification.

SUSTAINED PIPELINE, STRATEGIC GROWTH



CENTRAL PROJECTION

Evidence-Based Outlook

NYC-HBCU enrollment will **maintain 4,000-5,500 students annually**, with potential for moderate growth through 2026 and beyond.



SUCCESS FACTORS

- ✓ Continued institutional investment
- ✓ Policy attention and funding
- ✓ Critical data infrastructure development



KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- ↑ Charter sector growth (+6%)
- ↑ Diversification potential
- ↑ Model replication across boroughs



CRITICAL NEED

Comprehensive NYC DOE postsecondary enrollment tracking to enable evidence-based pipeline optimization and informed policy decisions.

AT A GLANCE

~4,365

NYC -HBCU Annual Enrollment

1.1M

NYC K-12 Students

10:1

Early College Demand

+7%

National HBCU Growth

This report synthesizes available data on NYC-HBCU enrollment patterns. All estimates should be interpreted with appropriate methodological uncertainty.

Research compiled from institutional reports, partnership announcements, and demographic analysis.



HBCU ACCESS NY's 2030 STRATEGIC GROWTH FRAMEWORK TO DOUBLE NYC-HBCU ENROLLEMENT RATES OVER 3 YEARS

01 INSTITUTIONAL PIPELINE

Expand the HBCU Early College Prep model citywide across all five boroughs, enabling over 1,000 students annually to earn free HBCU credits before high school graduation.

 **64 free credits earned early**

02 HBCU TUITION GAP FUND

Launch a robust citywide public-private partnership to raise additional scholarship funds to match organizations like UNCF and TCMF to offset out-of-state tuition costs.

 **\$53B more in lifetime earnings**

03 GARANTEED ADMISSION

Proactively explore HBCU partnerships where NYC students with a certain GPAs gain guaranteed admittance, removing application barriers and fostering early college-going.

 **Significant increase in college enrollment**

04 CULTURAL IMMERSION & ALUMNI NETWORKS

Expand HBCU college tours for middle school students and embed HBCU alumni as mentors in high-need schools to strengthen cultural connections and support networks.

 **70% six-year graduation rate**

05 STEM - CITY CAREER LOOP

Develop a pipeline connecting HBCU graduates to NYC-based internships and (tech, finance, etc.) ensuring career opportunities that encourage graduates to return and thrive.

 **HBCUs produce 25% STEM grads**

06 HBCU x NYC TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS

Partner with HBCU "Schools of Education" to create a direct recruitment-to-residency program for HBCU seniors who return to teach in high-need NYC districts.

 **HBCUs produce 50% of Black teachers**