



# Reporting on the 2025 NYC Elections

Resources for students from [Press Pass NYC](#) Updated April 28th, 2025

This is a big election year in NYC! Voters will choose a new mayor, along with city council members and other elected officials. This booklet contains resources to help you cover these elections in a way that's meaningful for your fellow students. At the bottom you'll see **STORY IDEAS** in yellow.

## What is a Primary?

A **primary** is when voters choose a candidate to represent their party in the upcoming November general election. **Democrats** vote among the Democratic candidates (for Mayor and other positions) and **Republicans** do the same. You must be a registered Republican to vote in the Republican primary and a registered Democrat to vote in the Democratic primary.

The [NYC Primary](#) is on June 24th.

The last day to register to vote in the primary is June 14th. [This link](#) shows where to register. And this link shows the [qualifications to vote](#). In general: you must be 18 years-old and a U.S. citizen.

Registered voters can vote EARLY between June 14-22. Those early voting poll sites aren't the same as they are on regular primary day, when many more sites are open. See where to vote early [here](#).

**Weird Fact:** Sometimes a Democratic or Republican candidate will be endorsed by a third-party. For example, the left-leaning [Working Families Party](#) will often endorse a Democrat in a contested primary to flex their power. There's also a [Conservative Party](#) that often supports Republicans. A candidate who wins a primary with the backing of a third party can then use that in the general election. Voters can check the box for that candidate on the WFP or Conservative ballot line. It's a way of showing some independence from the two-party system.

# Which Elected Officials Are We Voting For and What Do They Do?

NYC has a mayor, 51 city council members, a public advocate, a comptroller and 5 borough presidents. Want to know who does what? Read more on their jobs in [About City Government](#). For something more lively, watch [this video](#) on the different roles elected officials play in a specific scenario: open streets (car-free zones).

Tons of people are running for office this year because NYC has term limits: each elected official is barred from running for more than two consecutive terms. So everyone who got elected in 2017 and reelected in 2021 must vacate their seat and let new people run for the positions.

## How Does Voting Work? Isn't it Winner Takes All?

New York primaries used to be much simpler with clear winners and losers. But now we use a system called Ranked Choice.

It's kind of like applying to a public high school in NYC: You rank your favorite choices in numeric order and then hope for the best.

Well, not exactly. But close!

With Ranked Choice voting, you can rank up to five candidates, allowing you to support your favorite candidate without worrying about whether they're likely to win. It gives you more say in who gets elected. Even if your top choice candidate does not win, you can still help choose who does.

Supporters of this system say it helps more diverse candidates win elections. Cities that have implemented ranked choice voting have elected more women and more women of color, making their elected officials more representative of their communities.

Read about Ranked Choice Voting and watch a video [HERE](#).

For more about NYC elections, including poll workers and how to run for office, go to the [Board of Elections website](#).

[The NY Public Library](#) also has lots of voting information and it's in many languages, too.

You can also see a sample of your ballot by typing your address into [Ballotpedia](#)!

How to get more young people to vote? [Newvoters.org](#)

# Who's On the Ballot

## Mayor

Our current mayor is Democrat Eric Adams, but he's encountered a lot of problems lately - legally and politically. He says he's still a Democrat. But he will NOT run in the Democratic primary because [he is going to run as an Independent](#) in the November General Election.

That leaves a bunch of other Democratic candidates competing in the primary. Only 1 Republican is running, Curtis Sliwa, so there is no contested Republican primary for Mayor.

The Working Families Party [may run a candidate for Mayor](#) in the General Election. This means there could be FOUR candidates for Mayor on the November ballot. Unless the Working Families Party withdraws its candidate to back whoever wins the Democratic primary.

**A few websites are tracking the major candidates.** They usually look at viability: how much money a candidate raised says something about the strength of their campaign. But you should also be able to read about their positions on major issues and any controversies.

**The New York Times** is tracking the candidates **for mayor** [HERE](#) with a full list.

[The City has a list](#) of all the current candidates running for contested seats

The website **City and State** also keeps a list of candidates starting with the candidates for [MAYOR](#). City and State's short articles about each candidate are below:

[Eric Adams](#), [Andrew Cuomo](#), [Brad Lander](#), [Adrienne Adams](#), [Jessica Ramos](#), [Zellnor Myrie](#), [Zohran Mamdani](#), [Scott Stringer](#), [Michael Blake](#), [Jim Walden](#), [Whitney Tilson](#), [Curtis Sliwa](#)

**Take note on Candidate Websites.** An elected official's campaign website is VERY different from the website for their elected office. For example, Mayor Eric Adams has an [official website as mayor](#). He also has a [campaign website](#). The campaign is funded entirely by his donors – not by city funds that go to his office as mayor. It's the same with all other elected officials. That's why you should visit their campaign websites to see where they stand on issues and then, if they currently hold an office, also look at that government website to see what they're doing in office.

## City Council

These local races get less attention. There are 51 city council members - each represents about 160,000 people. That's bigger than many cities.

Want to see who represents you? Check [HERE](#).

To read more about who's currently in the Council and how the system works, plus a little history, check out [this page from the NYC Green Book](#).

City and State has [an article here](#) tracking all the contested races for City Council. You can use that to find candidates in your area, and then seek out their campaign websites. **These may be very important for your readers** because they're your local representatives.

## Comptroller

Also called "controller," this person watches the city's books. They're in charge of a city budget worth more than \$110 billion. Read more on the position and its enormous financial responsibilities [here from The City](#).

Comptroller Brad Lander is NOT running for re-election. Here's who IS running:

[Justin Brannan](#) - also endorsed by [Working Families Party](#)  
[Mark Levine](#)  
[Kevin Parker](#)  
[Ismael Malave Perez](#)

## Public Advocate

Jumaane Williams is not affected by term limits because he was elected four years ago and he is running again as a Dem with no opposition.

## Borough Presidents

Each of the five boroughs has its own president. According to [NYC Votes](#): *The Borough President serves as an advocate for their borough. They consult with the Mayor on the annual budget, provide grants to local organizations, and advise on rezoning.* (They appoint representatives to the City Planning and Community Boards.)

The boroughs have different names than you might expect on the ballot:

Manhattan: New York County  
Brooklyn: Kings County  
Queens: Queens County  
Bronx: Bronx County  
Staten Island: Richmond County

## Manhattan BP Candidates - all Democrats

[Brad Hoylman-Sigal](#)  
[Keith Powers](#)

[Calvin Sun](#)

## Brooklyn BP Candidates - Democrats

[Khari Edwards](#) challenger

Incumbent [Antonio Reynoso](#)

## Bronx BP Candidates

Vanessa Gibson, incumbent (no campaign website but [on ballotpedia](#))

Rafael Salamanca (no campaign website, but on [ballotpedia](#))

## Queens BP Candidates

[Donovan Richards](#), incumbent Democrat

Republicans:

[Henry Ikezi](#)

Von Del Valle (no website, but [on IG](#))

Bashek Grimes (no website, but [on IG](#))

The Queens Republican Club hosted a candidate event in January, [read here](#)

## Staten Island - Richmond County

[Incumbent Vito Fossella](#) is unopposed in the June Republican primary. A Democrat, [Michael Colombo](#), will challenge him in the November general election.

Colombo kicked off his campaign in February, read [here](#) in the Staten Island Advance

## Manhattan District Attorney

The district attorney is the person who prosecutes crime in the borough. For more, [read this article](#) from the last election.

[Patrick Timmins](#) is challenging incumbent [Alvin Bragg](#). Bragg is famous for prosecuting Trump. Timmins claims he's not tough enough on crime. There are plenty of statistics you can explore to verify these claims and to understand the office. You can use the [NYPD's crime states](#).

## Community Education Councils

These elections are way under the radar. Community Education Councils represent the elementary and middle schools in specific geographic districts. There are also elected councils for the high schools and special education programs. Only parents of NYC public school students can vote! Read more about this system [HERE](#), votes are being gathered until May 13th.

## Where to read about the candidates and issues?

NYC's newspapers do not cover politics as much as they used to. The New York Times will mostly focus on the race for mayor and maybe an occasional council district that's contested. The [NY Post](#) and [The NY Daily News](#) will do more "flash in the pan" stories about candidates if they're in trouble or do something quirky.

Here are some more "wonky" but reliable sources of local political news. You can sign up for their newspapers.

[Gothamist/WNYC Public Radio](#) (they are one joint news operation)

[The City](#) - independent, nonprofit journalism

You can sign up for the Ranked Choices newsletter on election topics from The City [here](#)

Spectrum [NY1 News](#) has a section for each borough

[The Amsterdam News](#)

[City & State](#)

[City Limits](#)

[NY Focus](#) - statewide, too

[AM New York](#) - check out the "boroughs" section at the top for each borough

[HellGate](#) for more opinionated news

[Epicenter NYC](#)

**For Brooklyn news**, read [Brooklyn Paper](#), [Brooklyn News 12](#), [Brooklyn Eagle](#)

**The Bronx:** [The Bronx Times](#) and the [Riverdale Press](#) cover local politics frequently, and

[Channel 12 News](#)

**Manhattan:** [West Side Rag](#); [Harlem Times](#). Schneps Media owns several Manhattan Papers [online here](#) including The Villager and Downtown Express.

**Queens:** read [Qns.com](#), [The Queens Daily Eagle](#), [Queens Chronicle](#)

The **Staten Island Advance's** online site, [SILive](#), is an excellent source of news for Staten Island

## What is "Campaign Finance"?

We all know there's a LOT of money in politics. But New York City is one of many cities that tries to discourage political donations from affecting elections. We set aside public, taxpayer dollars to help candidates run for office. But there's a catch: they only qualify **if they limit** the size of each contribution to \$2000 and raise a lot of individual donations.

Candidates don't have to limit the size of their donations or participate in this matching funds program. But the incentive for it is simple: limit your donations, and you get public funds. And if the city helps people run for office who don't have access to piles of money (or friends with piles of money), then the process is going to be more democratic.

Here's how the [Campaign Finance Board](#) describes the system:

*The voluntary public financing program matches small-dollar contributions from individuals who reside in New York City, helping to amplify the voices of New Yorkers in city elections. A \$10 contribution from a NYC resident to a participating candidate in the 2021 election could be worth as much as \$90 to their campaign.*

Read more details on [this CFB page](#).

The Campaign Finance Board runs this matching funds program, which makes it a fantastic source of information. Candidates that agree to limit their donations in exchange for public funding **must disclose** where their donations are coming from! It's a fun thing to geek out on if you want to follow the money in politics. Though it involves a lot of research.

**One more thing:** campaign finance gets covered by all the mainstream media. Too many of their stories about elections focus on which candidate raised how much money. Money is seen as a measure for a candidate's viability, often more than where they stand on the issues.

You can see the entire list of candidates for every office on the Campaign Finance Board's website [here](#), in alphabetical order. You can also see how much money they raised [HERE](#).

## What Do Students Care About?

So if the mainstream media are all covering how much money the candidates are raising, what can student newspapers write about?

First - many public high school students don't even know there's an election. Haidee Chu wrote [this story for The City](#) about students at Bayside High School - the alma mater of Mayor Eric Adams and challenger Adrienne Adams, the City Council Speaker.

It's not surprising because primaries in general don't get as many voters as a general election, about 25% of eligible voters on average, and young people aren't as active in politics. Maybe student media outlets can change that, by writing about the issues that matter to young people?

## Election Story Ideas: Starting Points

- One thing a student newspaper can do is **educate first-time voters** about how the process works. That's a form of service journalism. For example: how does Ranked Choice voting work? Here's [an analysis of ranked choice](#) in the 2021 NYC elections. More stories for first-timers:
  - **Ten things** a first-time voter should know about
  - **How to research** where a candidate stands on the issues such as the cell phone policy, class size, testing plus crime and sanitation.

- **Voter turnout:** among 18-29 year-olds in the 2021 citywide elections, only 11% of eligible voters in that age group voted - the lowest of any age group. Those 60 and older voted the most but even that wasn't very high. [NYC Campaign Finance Board DATA](#).
- How can we increase voter turnout, especially among young people? [Community groups](#) can also bolster voter turnout by appealing to different groups. You might see them around your neighborhoods. They won't back a particular candidate but they'll do voter education drives. And the group [New Voters](#) is helping young people register.
- How to participate in an election **if you're under 18:** there are youth organizers who help get out the vote, NYC Campaign Finance Board can steer you to them.
- Why are some people **fearful** of voting? Ask fellow students and people in your community.
- The generational divide: How parents feel about the elections vs their children, which issues matter to them?
- Do the teachers in your school teach about elections?
- Research how your local city council members spent their **"discretionary funding" on education** by looking at how much money went to your school and others. You can find the answers [HERE](#). Seek out key words like "students" and "afterschool" for education related programs.
- Which candidates are endorsed by the teachers union (United Federation of Teachers) and the principals union (Council of Supervisors and Administrators). How much money are the unions spending and on which candidates?
- Watch one of the upcoming [citywide candidate debates](#) and report on what it was like.
- Check out a **candidate's record** on education (or another topic) and compare it to their challenger's plans.
- You might also want to **survey students** to see which issues matter to them. For example: Education? Transportation? Sanitation? Crime? Include a few topics. Take a poll. Then see where each candidate for a particular office stands on the issues that matter most to your students. For example: the candidates in a contested city council race in your borough. Or the mayoral candidates.
- Go deep on one issue, like education. Guess how much money goes to the public schools? About \$40 BILLION. You can learn more about that [here and watch the video](#). What do students think of the way the money is spent? Do any candidates speak to their concerns? [The NYT ran this article](#) in April on how little attention education is getting in this year's mayoral race: *The \$40 Billion Issue the N.Y.C. Mayoral Candidates Aren't Discussing. With more than 900,000 students, New York's public school system is the biggest in the United States, but it has received scant attention from candidates.*

Want more advice or answers to your questions? Our friends from the April 28th Zoom are here to help.

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