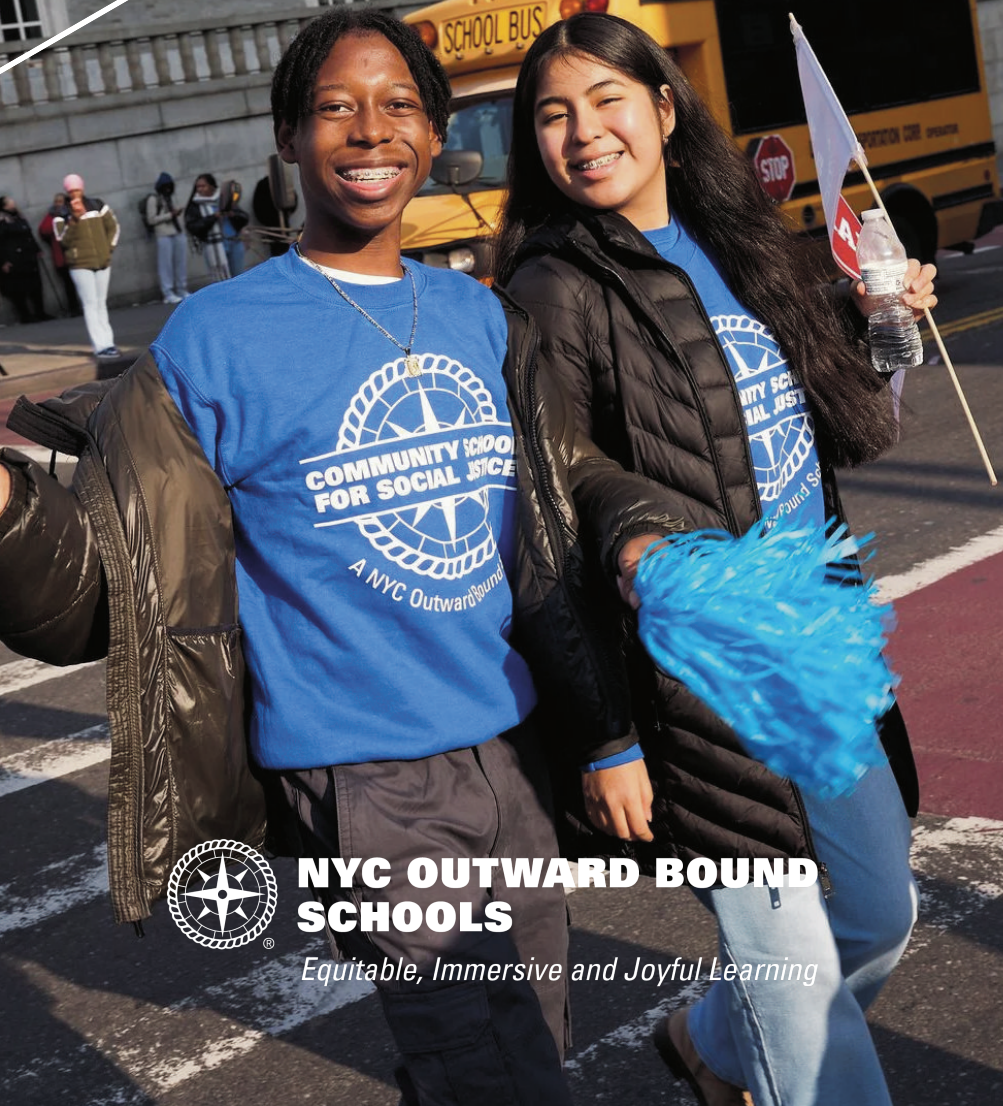


**IMPACT**  
2024



**NYC OUTWARD BOUND  
SCHOOLS**

*Equitable, Immersive and Joyful Learning*



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# DEAR CREW,

At this time last year, my only connection to NYC Outward Bound Schools was as the parent of students who attend MAELS, a Network middle school on Staten Island. Today, I'm approaching this work from an entirely different perspective as the organization's Interim Executive Director. I'm grateful to have been trusted with the responsibility of leadership during this phase of growth and transition. Personally, it has reaffirmed my family's decision to enroll our kids at an NYC Outward Bound school, where belonging, student agency and engagement take priority every day – in Crew, classroom and the outdoors.

Over the past year, thanks to the incredible commitment of our staff, consultants, board and supporters, we've made important progress in our three-year strategic plan. At a time when chronic absenteeism and the student mental health crisis looms large, we've solidified our approach to social, emotional and academic development (SEAD) – which, grounded in research, makes us uniquely positioned to support young people as *whole humans*, not just students. We've also defined our core values, the principles that guide the creation of our work, and our commitment to equity in education – all key foundational elements of this plan.

I hope you enjoy this year's Impact Report as much as I've enjoyed getting to know the work, myself. In this report, we're proud to share evidence of our impact in 50+ NYC schools that have implemented Crew, our signature advisory structure that supports SEAD. We take a look at new programming initiatives in the outdoors that provide a sense of agency and connection for young people of diverse backgrounds. And we honor the brilliant stories of educators and leaders who are making a difference in their classrooms and schools by teaching immersive, culturally responsive curriculum each day.

Without your support, none of this would be possible!

In gratitude,



Dina Guirguis  
Interim Executive Director



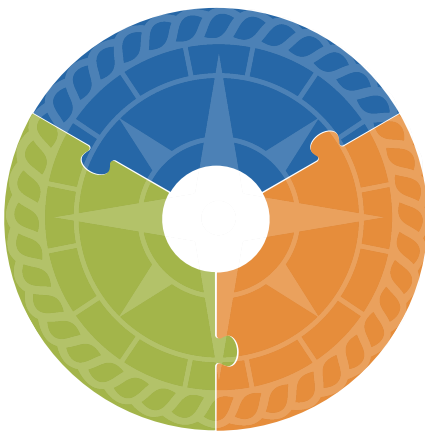
# OUR APPROACH TO SEAD



Our approach to working with students and schools is grounded in the understanding that social, emotional and academic development (SEAD) are innately interconnected to support young people to thrive.

Research shows that when students feel they belong and have a voice, they are more likely to succeed academically and develop a lifelong love of learning.

Our programs focus on creating immersive, deeper learning experiences that help students develop **SEAD competencies** in their classrooms, Crews, communities and the outdoors.



## SOCIAL

- Teamwork, collaboration & leadership
- Communication: speaking, writing & listening
- Adaptability & responsiveness

## EMOTIONAL

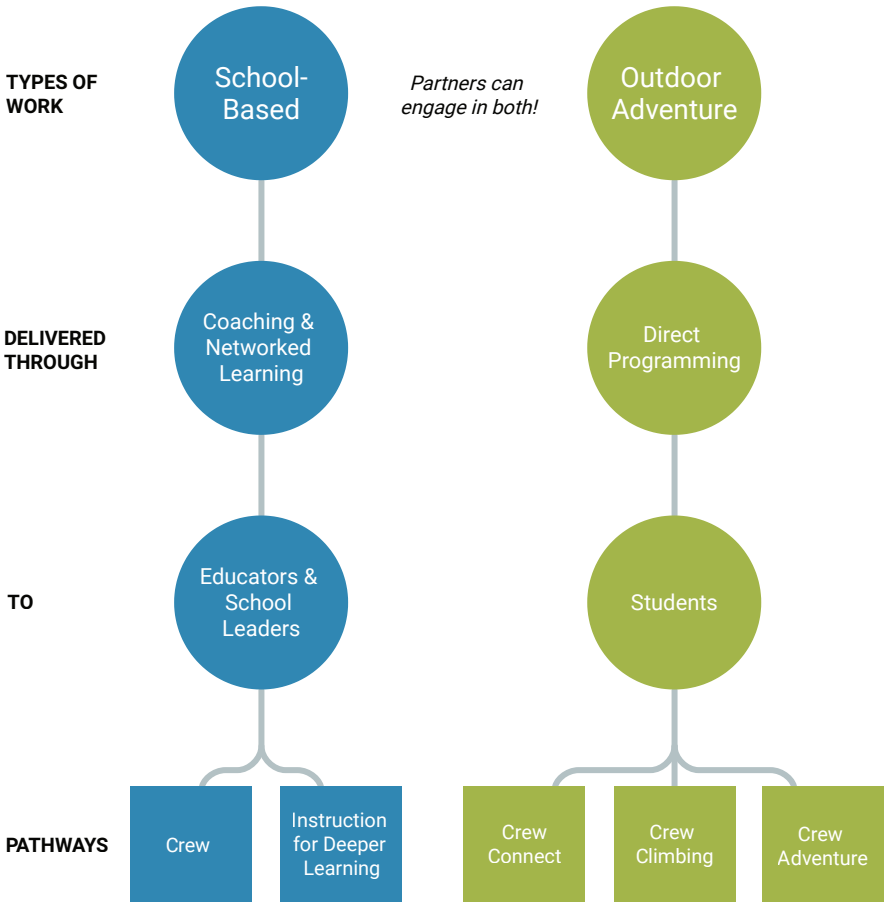
- Self-awareness: recognizing & managing personal emotions
- Empathy: understanding the perspectives & emotions of others
- Agency

## ACADEMIC

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- Persevering through setting goals, making a plan & sticking with it
- Reflecting & making connections to their own lives/world

# OUR WORK WITH PARTNERS

We are uniquely positioned to support schools in a holistic, comprehensive way because of our two distinct partnership opportunities: **School-Based** work and **Outdoor Adventure** programming. Within each bucket are multiple program pathways.



# BY THE NUMBERS



24,073

students served



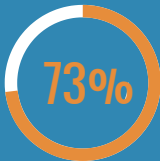
2,586

educators served



77

public schools served



of the students we work with are Black or Latinx



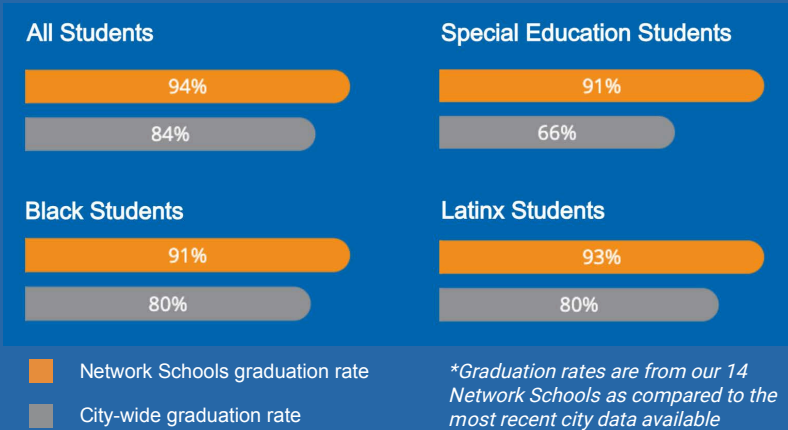
of the students we work with qualify for free or reduced lunch



of the students we work with receive special education services

# PREPARED TO THRIVE

Schools that have deep and long-standing partnerships with us — particularly our Network Schools — **annually outpace city graduation rates\*** by 10+ percentage points.



## COLLEGE & CAREER MARCH ENCOURAGES SENIORS TO DREAM BIG AND PURSUE PASSIONS

In December, nearly 1,000 seniors from nine NYC Outward Bound schools across all five boroughs marched letters of gratitude — to counselors, mentors, teachers, family and friends — to their local post offices as part of the **13th annual College and Career March**, cheered on by fellow students, teachers, family members, local businesses and elected officials.

The beloved tradition, which celebrates student perseverance alongside the critical support systems that help them develop high-quality postsecondary plans, was reimagined this year to more fully incorporate all experiences — not only the majority of students who end up going directly to college, but also those who have chosen an alternate path.



# INSTRUCTION FOR DEEPER LEARNING



Instruction for Deeper Learning is a school-wide approach to teaching and learning where students and educators are empowered to come together to create complex and impactful work. Every day, in each class, the leadership, ideas and reflections of young people drive our efforts to improve their education and achieve equity in schools and beyond.

Our coaches currently support 20 schools across the city by helping them design **culturally relevant curriculum**, deliver **inclusive and challenging daily instruction**, and implement **equity-focused assessment**.

## CURRICULUM THAT INSPIRES



**Corey Sapp**, a Dean and Social Studies teacher at CSSJ, was chosen as this year's R. Gaynor McCown Excellence in Teaching award winner. At our 2024 Gala in May, Corey spoke about designing a unit on the rarely taught Haitian Revolution that would engage students and help them think critically about issues in the world today – colorism, racism, discrimination, educational inequity, and more.

I want students to understand that...they have the ability to go within and transform themselves into something greater for society.

- Corey Sapp, CSSJ

In the process of designing the unit, Corey used a guiding question to ground his thinking – *do you want to teach about revolutions or do you want to create revolutionary people?*



## The Atom

**Michele Balsam-Moga, Aristo Orginos & Karman Feng, West End Secondary School**

At West End Secondary School, 11th graders examine the very building blocks of life — atoms — to ultimately assess whether or not the benefits of nuclear technology outweigh the drawbacks. The kick-off of this interdisciplinary unit brings together several experts to offer their insights, and in past years has included power plant managers, X-ray technicians, and even a representative from the UN committee on nuclear disarmament.

In chemistry, students examine the impact of nuclear bombs, nuclear energy and radiation in medicine. In AP Government, they participate in a mock trial and draft a policy proposal. And in English, students read post-WWII Japanese short fiction about the aftermath of the atomic bomb, and develop their final position statements following a Socratic Seminar.

“This expedition relies on reading, writing, and transferring ideas from class to class, but also on listening to each other,” said Michele Balsam-Moga, AP Government teacher. “We want the students to be collaborative in how they build their final position statements.”

## Saving the Planet – Addressing Climate Catastrophe with the Power of Rhetoric

**Gabriel Fontes, Leaders High School**

At Leaders High School, 10th grade English students closely analyze the elements of persuasive rhetoric in a unit designed around climate change. Using speeches by well-known climate activists like Greta Thunberg as their models, students craft their own arguments around the usage of fossil fuels, and this spring, had the opportunity to deliver them publicly outside of Citigroup headquarters on Earth Day.

Many Leaders students have a critical stake in this issue, having experienced the negative effects of climate change over the years.

“This is personal to me because climate change left my house flooded on October 22, 2012. My nephew is 3 years old, and struggles to breathe because of his asthma from the mold and thick air in my home,” said 10th grader Jayden. “In my opinion, Citigroup should reinvest into communities like Coney Island.”

# 67%

of students feel that they are given work that challenges them.



Read more about this case study in a [City Limits](#) article

Communication: speaking, writing & listening

# CREW



Crew is our **signature advisory structure** that supports social, emotional and academic development (SEAD).

We currently partner with 50+ schools across all five boroughs of NYC to help them build sustainable Crew structures and a school-wide culture of Crew, where students **practice empathy and compassion, take on leadership roles, and work toward shared goals.**

The Crew pathway is delivered through a powerful mix of data-driven one-on-one coaching and networked learning, during which educators can increase their collective impact through shared learning and problem-solving.

Nearly

# 60%

of our students report that Crew helps them prepare academically for the future



The purpose of Crew is the purpose of the school. It's the piece that holds everything together. It allows for young people to build relationships with other young people and with adults over a sustained period of time. It's really important that young people have the opportunity to be leaders and role models.

- Taeko Onishi, Principal  
Lyons Community School



## NEW ARRIVALS: CREW PLAYS CRITICAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING RECENT IMMIGRANTS

“Crew is the place where you talk to people from different countries; you sit down and you talk and talk and talk, everybody listens to you... it’s magic,” said Joel, a sophomore at Bronx International High School, who arrived from the Dominican Republic last year.

Joel was overwhelmed at first, but says that Crew has allowed him to make friends and learn English.

Bronx International, a fourth-year partner of NYC Outward Bound’s Crew pathway, is culturally and linguistically diverse, serving mostly students who have been in the U.S. for less than four years.

Crew Advisor David Choi sees Crew as a space for students to forge cross-cultural friendships and to directly address life challenges. Lessons in Choi’s Crew advisory alternate between a social, emotional and academic focus. On academic-focused Crew days, students may receive postsecondary counseling or goal-setting support.

“Crew helps me to know and analyze as well as plan what I need to do,” said Wilmer, a sophomore who arrived from the Dominican Republic five years ago.

Wilmer and Choi, his Crew Advisor, discussed a healthy work/life balance, and how to maintain academic success and personal wellbeing by managing stress. A child of immigrants himself, Choi is well aware of the pressure many immigrant students feel to succeed. He uses the Crew structure to offer informed guidance and support.

Choi says he leverages the relationships he’s built with his students in Crew to push them toward their goals. “They know that I truly see their potential and I genuinely want them to succeed and reach new heights.”

**See more from Bronx International & other schools in a case study about SEAD in Crew:**





## AGENCY IN ACTION: STUDENTS LEADING THE WAY

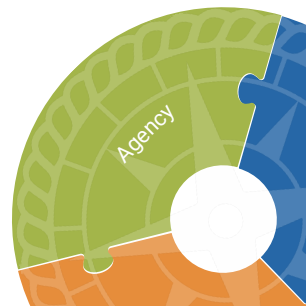
Crew is most impactful when it's run *by students, for students*. This year, NYC Outward Bound Schools piloted the Youth Crew Leadership (YCL) program, which offered the **training, support and leadership development for students to facilitate and lead Crew at their schools**.

A tight-knit team of 32 high school students from three partner schools spent a year working together under the guidance of Jonny Soto-Altrogge, Senior Crew Coach, selecting projects to work on together that would benefit their respective communities. Students at South Brooklyn Community High School led mental health workshops for their peers, WHEELS students facilitated Crew for younger grades, and students at East Side Community High School participated in classroom walkthroughs and created proposals based on their observations to pitch to school leadership.

The full group also visited Sharpe Reservation for a retreat centered around team building and collective problem solving.

These student leaders will now return to their schools with the skills to encourage and support their peers to have a voice in Crew and across the school.

**96%**  
of YCL students reported  
that they feel confident  
contributing ideas to  
building Crew community at  
their schools.



# OUTDOOR ADVENTURE



## STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE RETURN OF URBAN PROGRAMMING

This spring, a group of NYC Outward Bound Schools Student Advisory Council members representing WHEELS, Launch, Brooklyn Collaborative, Brooklyn International, Kurt Hahn, Channel View, Eagle Academy of Staten Island, and IHPCH helped **pilot a new neighborhood-based urban exploration program.**

Student Advisors serve as liaisons from their schools and collectively help improve conditions around belonging, agency and engagement for students across the NYC Outward Bound network.

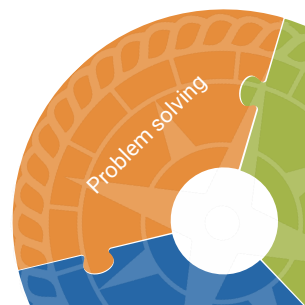
In May, they embarked on a day program, exploring the streets of Long Island City – visiting the sculpture center, waterfront, and more, to better understand the idea of belonging and what supports it.

“I’m proud that we were all able to come together, share ideas and make a change,” said student advisor Leslie.

Students who participated in Outdoor Adventure programming this year reported a

**17%** ↑

increase in perseverance toward their goals.





## PROUD AND OUTWARD BOUND: BUILDING CONNECTION AND EMPATHY

This spring, with the help of a grant to support student mental health from The Wellness Classroom, NYC Outward Bound Schools offered a new affinity-based course at Sharpe Reservation for LGBTQIA+ students at our partner schools.

The first-ever **Proud and OUTward Bound** course brought together around 30 students and staff from A School Without Walls and Leaders High School.

The two-night retreat included a tailored slate of connection and reflection activities, including a visit to the Reservation's planetarium, hikes along various routes named for queer trailblazers, a pride flag craft, and even a special menu that involved purposeful ingredients like rainbow shish-kabobs and colorful breakfast cereals.

"The instructors were a great team and made us feel comfortable and cared for throughout the trip," said one student participant.

Following the success of the pilot program, recruitment is underway for this fall's Proud and OUTward Bound course in the hopes that it becomes a staple of Outdoor Adventure programming.





## NEW PARTNERSHIP GIVES HUNDREDS A TASTE OF OUR WORK

This year, NYC Schools' **Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD)** contracted NYC Outward Bound Schools to bring our core work to even more schools, students and educators throughout the city. Over the course of the year, we provided 49 single- and multi-day "intro" workshops that offer a slice of our approach to schools who may be new to community building, Crew, Instruction for Deeper Learning, and integrating social, emotional and academic development (SEAD) into classroom learning.

The three-day **SEAD workshop**, in particular, combined expertise from both our Coaching and Outdoor Adventure teams, producing a truly unique and holistic experience for educators.

To kick off the workshop, educators put on their student hats — or harnesses, rather — and took part in a fun and challenging rock climbing experience **to better understand the mindset and emotions of a learner**. The next two days focused on how the skills fostered in an immersive experience can support community building, followed by a deep dive into the types of classroom structures and protocols that support SEAD.

After successful delivery of this pilot series, OSYD has asked us to double our programming for 2024-25!

66

What I found most valuable was taking the time to participate in activities that reignite the passion I have for building connections with my students and finding ways to make school communities stronger.

- Workshop participant

91%

of participants found their program valuable

# THE BIG RAPPEL

On Monday, May 6, a fearless few became the first in history to make a **rope descent of the world's most famous skyscraper, The Empire State Building**. This incredible feat — the first of its kind — was a proud collaboration between the Empire State Realty Trust and Outward Bound, several years in the making.

The funds raised from **The Big Rappel** provide transformational learning opportunities to young people in New York City and across the globe through Outward Bound.

Alumna **Jennifer Lopez**, a 2018 graduate of WHEELS, was among the lucky few to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime experience. At our 2024 Gala in May, Jenni spoke fondly of her high school experience, remembering the tight-knit community at WHEELS and the opportunity to attend a challenging and life-changing two-week course at North Carolina Outward Bound School.

"Outward Bound has provided me with a lot of firsts — from my first time whitewater rafting, to becoming the first in my family to go to college," she said. "Because of Outward Bound, I'm always welcoming the next challenge in my life, including The Big Rappel."

**Hear more about Jenni's Big Rappel experience in this video from our 2024 Gala:**



# THANK YOU, SUPPORTERS

NYC Outward Bound Schools is deeply grateful to our many friends and supporters.

This list reflects gifts of \$100+ made during our 2023-2024 fiscal year, which spanned from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. We apologize for any errors or omissions.

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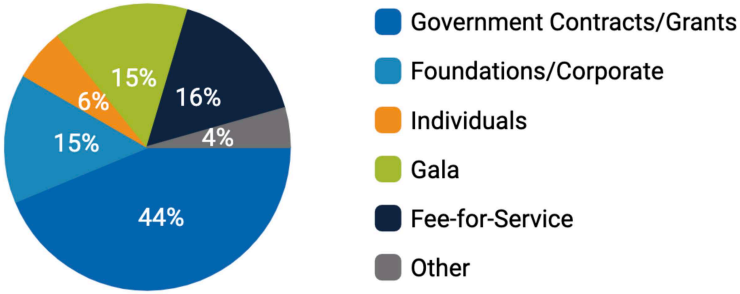
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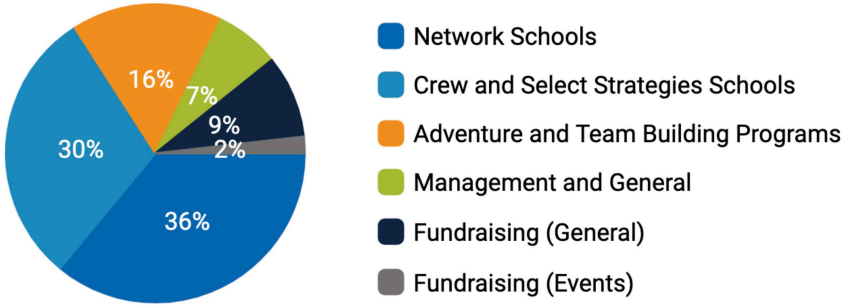
# FINANCIALS

Year ending June 30, 2024  
Preliminary 2023-24 Financials

## Operating Revenue: \$7,562,096



## Operating Expenses: \$7,827,196



## NYC OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOLS IN THE NEWS

[New York City's First Hybrid School Gives Students Flexible, Real-World Learning](#)  
*The 74*

[Gio Benitez rappels down the Empire State Building](#)  
*Good Morning America*

[Students at Brooklyn Collaborative Studies march through neighborhood to celebrate post-graduation plans](#)  
*News 12 Brooklyn*

[NYC-Based Educational Nonprofits Join Together to Champion Social, Emotional and Academic Development in Schools](#)  
*AP News*

[SMBC Announces Building Resilient Futures to Enrich Youth Through the Power of the Outdoors](#)  
*Business Wire*

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