

RESILIENCE. REFLECTION. SUCCESS.

Contributed by Administrator
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Why are we here?

CUNY Prep is a unique high school program for over-age and/or under-credited youth. We serve students between the ages of 16 and 18. Our aim is to provide our students with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to:

- pass the GED with a high score.
- apply to and be accepted to an appropriate post-secondary institution (college).
- set and accomplish both academic and personal goals.

Our school is proud to partner with college campuses of the City University of New York (CUNY) to ensure a smooth transition for those of you who choose to attend a college in the CUNY system. Resilience. (ri-'zil-yen(t)s) noun 1 : an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.

"My effort in school and my effort in my home life has become very positive. I've made a complete turnaround since making the decision to come back to school. My anger problems and laziness have changed into something good that makes me want to reach my goals." -Jenna, 16

At CUNY Prep, we view ourselves as resilient, or "able to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change." So what does that mean? What does it look like to be resilient as a student? As a teacher? Why do we value resilience within our school community? Being resilient opens us to new ways of thinking and being, whether in math class or in our personal lives. When we are resilient, we are able to envision ourselves differently, and, more importantly, we are able to make decisions and take action that enable us to make our visions a reality.

In what ways have you been resilient in your life?

How has it made you who you are today or who you wish to be tomorrow?

What talents and strengths do you bring with you to our school and how will you use them to make decisions and shape your future? Reflection. (ri-'flek-shun) noun 1 : a thought, idea, or opinion formed or a remark made as a result of meditation.

"I needed a second chance for my future. All the time before in my old schools I was bad and I used to cut. I never even wanted to go to school. Now I know that everything I thought about myself before was wrong. Here, I feel like I have hope for something better." -Christopher, 17

In order to answer the questions we've asked above, you need to do some reflection. At CUNY Prep, we are "reflective practitioners," which is a fancy way of saying that we stop, pause, and think about what we're doing and learning along the way. You'll be asked to reflect during your first week at CUNY Prep as you write your autobiography. This story about your life serves two purposes: First, it gets you thinking about who you are, how you got here, and what you hope to achieve. Second, it gets us thinking about who you are and how we can best meet your needs as a learner and young adult.

A good example of how reflective practice has had an effect on the school can be found in our curricula and instruction.

All students at CUNY Prep are required to take courses in the key discipline areas: Humanities, Math, and Science. Rather than teaching you just sets of facts, dates and formulas, teachers have designed their classes to engage you in activities that help you to think scientifically, mathematically, and historically about phenomena that surround you every day as well as events that may occur in distant lands or times.

In a Forensic Science class, students work in groups to examine a staged crime scene. You may use microscopes, centrifuges, and fingerprinting devices to discover the victim's identity. Students in Environmental Science design a community health survey and then conduct a community education campaign on common health problems. In Humanities, you participate in moot courts, reenact Supreme Court cases, film your own episode of "People's Court," or conduct a voter education fair for the community. Students in 16 Mathematics go on "shopping" trips to local stores and banks to calculate interest, sales tax and practice percentage conversions, or learn financial literacy such as how to avoid debt or play the stock market. We developed this method of instruction by reflecting on our students, their ways of learning, and our own beliefs about good teaching and successful schools.

But being reflective practitioners doesn't just apply to instruction and textbooks. Perhaps most importantly, it influences how we interact as a community made up of individuals. It is essential that we examine and discuss the

language we use when we communicate with one another, the manner in which we let others know that we care, and the consequences that we face when, either with or without reflection, we make poor decisions. Success. (suk-'ses)
noun 1 : favorable or desired outcome; 2 : one that succeeds.

"I've been doing good. I'm not paying attention to negative stuff. I always do my work and write notes. At first it was hard for me in school, but now I'm trying my best to succeed. I think I'm getting smarter!" -Yadira, 17

Success at CUNY Prep comes in many forms. We expect you to put forth your best effort to achieve not only the requirements for graduation but also the goals you set for yourself. The school is structured to support each student's path to success by providing opportunities for academic and personal guidance, such as tutoring, Math and Writing labs that offer specialized support using computer programs, opportunities for peer counseling, leadership training, college visits, and health and wellness workshops.

The CUNY Prep mission states that our goal is to "inspire students to become life-long learners." So what does that mean? Success is more than just obtaining a diploma. Students who graduate from CUNY Prep are able to take their education to "the next level," whether this means pursuing college, securing a good career, or finding continuous opportunities throughout your life to learn and grow. At CUNY Prep, we show you the options that are available to you after high school, and work with you to strive for the very best future possible.