"CUNY’s Pathways initiative furthers the promise of access that is the cornerstone of public higher education. By ensuring seamless transfer from community colleges to four-year colleges, the initiative sends a powerful message about the importance of community college education—and about the University’s belief in the potential of every student to achieve true academic progress. The combination of access and excellence at CUNY, the nation’s largest public urban institution, is a remarkable achievement and serves as a beacon of hope to colleges and universities across the country."

— Eduardo Padrón
President, Miami Dade College

"CUNY has always been a university where students of all backgrounds can still achieve the American dream of advancement and mobility. In implementing a system-wide general education plan, the University demonstrates that student advancement remains its priority. The Pathways initiative does much more than encourage student progress toward a degree; it makes clear to students what they should be learning along the way. It reinforces the importance of an intellectual journey that never ceases and the rewards that come from the life of the mind."

— Anthony Marx
President, NY Public Library
former president, Amherst College

"The Pathways to Degree Completion initiative is an outstanding model for public higher education: a general education and transfer system that puts learning outcomes and academic rigor at its core. It goes well beyond a clarification of requirements and focuses on content and the development of the critical thinking and analytical skills that will be essential for every 21st-century college graduate. I applaud The City University of New York for its genuine achievement in creating a plan that acknowledges a multiplicity of intellectual pathways and emphasizes quality above all else."

— Kevin Reilly
President, University of Wisconsin System
“The City University of New York’s general education reform is nothing less than a ringing endorsement and reinvigoration of the historic mission of public higher education: the promise of access, the opportunity for academic progress. The Pathways initiative appropriately focuses the academic enterprise on student learning, with defined outcomes, clearly marked requirements, and an emphasis on core proficiency. It is a clear and welcome message from the country’s largest public urban system that a commitment to student advancement remains public higher education’s most important mission.

— Mark Yudof
President, University of California

“With its thoughtful plan to reinvigorate the core curriculum, The City University of New York continues to demonstrate its national leadership in public higher education. CUNY’s Pathways initiative — grounded in clearly articulated learning outcomes and expectations — emphasizes both academic rigor and ease of student transfer and encourages the success of all students, regardless of their point of entry to advanced learning. As public institutions across the country work to advance meaningful ways to maximize both access and quality, CUNY is to be commended for developing an innovative and forward-looking model of general education that furthers the goals of participation and proficiency.”

— Molly Corbett Broad
President, American Council on Education

“The City University’s new Common Core curriculum is nothing less than a triumph for higher education in the United States. The faculty and administration of CUNY’s colleges should feel proud that they have produced a Common Core of study that is rigorous, that is required of all students and that will permit a much easier flow of students from one tier in the system to another — from the community colleges ultimately to the flagship colleges in the system. It combines what most well-informed educators in large public universities have been striving to achieve for decades: a combination of access, opportunity for social mobility through the ability to transfer credits from one college in the system to another and academic excellence. By basing the evaluation of the core classes on learning outcomes rather than course titles, CUNY has taken a huge leap forward in demonstrating its commitment to accountability and demonstrable results in its colleges. It is easy to see why the CUNY Common Core will become the standard that other complex educational systems will try to emulate and match in quality.”

— Jonathan R. Cole
John Mitchell Mason Professor of the University
Provost & Dean of Faculties, 1989-2003
Columbia University
“The new Pathways to Degree Completion Initiative at CUNY is a welcome and potentially powerful approach to ensuring strong general education across CUNY’s multiple colleges. It is based upon a Common Core that makes great academic sense, and Pathways has the added benefit of being student-centered. Students will understand the core courses they need for their education, and they will be able to transfer those courses readily within the system. This plan represents precisely the kind of thinking we need in today’s severely challenged public universities: better educational outcomes produced in a more efficient way.”

— Hunter R. Rawlings III
President, Association of American Universities
President, Cornell University, 1995-2003

“The CUNY plan creates a solid integrated approach to embracing educational success across a very broad demographic and will lay the foundation for new approaches to college attainment at higher levels of quality with lower levels of cost. It is a model critically important for regional and national socioeconomic success going forward.”

— Michael M. Crow
President, Arizona State University

“CUNY is the nation’s largest urban public university system; if the Pathways initiative had merely organized and clarified requirements among its colleges, it would have achieved something substantial. But the system-wide emphasis on both fundamentals and flexible areas defined by rigorous learning outcomes marks Pathways as a truly momentous step forward for CUNY’s dual missions of access and excellence.”

— William G. Bowen
President Emeritus, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
President, Princeton University, 1972-1988
Founding Chairman, Ithaka/JSTOR

“The City University of New York meets its historic access mission only halfway when it admits and enrolls qualified students. The University is equally responsible for helping its students remain engaged in meaningful, rigorous study and making it possible for them to complete all of their degree requirements in a sensible and timely manner. That is exactly what the Pathways project is doing. This is why the CUNY Board of Trustees, following extensive consultation with University constituencies and a public hearing, unanimously adopted a comprehensive policy resolution in full support of the Pathways initiative.”

— Benno Schmidt
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
The City University of New York
President, Yale University, 1986-1992
“It is my pleasure to offer my endorsement of the Pathways to Degree Completion Initiative. This is a commonsense plan that will benefit student learning and increase the rate of degree completion at CUNY. Chancellor Matt Goldstein’s logical and well-reasoned approach will improve and smooth the transfer of credits among the CUNY institutions, addressing from the outset the issue of the content and quality of the courses that will count for credit throughout the system, rather than solely focusing on the technical articulation between community and senior colleges. This will strengthen the overall quality of CUNY degrees by clarifying core areas of content knowledge required for graduation and articulating learning outcomes for general education.”

— Vartan Gregorian
President, Carnegie Corporation of New York

“CUNY’s revision of its core curriculum represents an engagement with a national rethinking of general education. During the last decade, American colleges and universities — from Harvard to flagship publics to community colleges — have rethought curricular design and re-imagined what knowledge might mean in a new century. The elements of these curricular reforms vary, but they have in common a commitment to enhancing both the range and the depth of a student’s intellectual experience. CUNY’s Common Core is no exception.”

— William P. Kelly
President, CUNY Graduate Center

“A major issue for American higher education today is the challenge of providing both access and quality. Chancellor Goldstein’s proposal provides that. It grants access to all high school graduates and provides a challenging core curriculum that offers a clear pathway to a quality education. It is an excellent model providing both access and quality.”

— Robert Berdahl
Interim President, University of Oregon
President, Association of American Universities, 2006-2011
Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley, 1997-2004
“Every college was represented at every stage of the development of the Common Core. Though we were selected for the Steering Committee because we had experience developing a core curriculum for our colleges, and for our expertise in the major disciplines, we were cautioned to put aside our particular discipline and campus interests and to be guided by the goal of developing a common general education curriculum for all CUNY students. I am very proud to attach my name to this core curriculum, which not only facilitates student transfer across campuses, but establishes a rigorous foundation in the liberal arts for all CUNY students.”

— Elizabeth Nunez
Distinguished Professor of English
Hunter College

“Because so many of our students enter the two-year colleges and then transfer to our four-year colleges — some 60 percent or more who graduate with baccalaureate degrees are in fact transfer students — it is imperative that the transfer process be improved across the University. The changes to be ushered in by the Pathways initiative will remove some of the unwieldy bureaucratic obstacles to graduation for our students. These will permit better integration between the various colleges and will help fulfill CUNY’s fundamental mission, which is to serve our students by providing a quality education.”

— Laird W. Bergad
Distinguished Professor of History
Director, Center for Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies
CUNY Graduate Center
Herbert H. Lehman College

“The new policy is totally consistent with best practices around the country. It will make the transfer process clear and dependable for students. In the longer run, under the new policy, I expect we shall see improvements in transfer rates and in degree-completion rates across our University.”

— Paul Attewell
Distinguished Professor of Sociology
CUNY Graduate Center