



Pathways to Education Equity Mentoring Program



The New York Civil Liberties Union – Suffolk County chapter is excited to announce the launch of our new **Pathways to Education Equity Mentoring Program (PEEMP)**. This program is designed to support parents in building collaborative relationships with their local school districts as they navigate the educational system.

Why do we need Pathways to Education Equity Mentoring Program? Because families deserve to know:

- why school administrators were placing barrier after barrier to prevent them from enrolling their children in a local school
- how their children's school suspensions may result in immigration officers sweeping their children up from their homes and taken to out-of-state detention centers to face possible deportation or result in local police showing up to their home demanding to search their home
- why their children's school was not responding to their children's pleas for help in addressing bullying

Our unique program was developed in partnership with parents, students, administrators, teachers, and local advocacy organizations committed to identifying solutions, closing gaps and creating an education system that works for **ALL** students. We are committed to developing solutions that come from the experience of students and families who know the barriers to education equity. **Our program starts by honoring students' and parents' strengths** and will use the “*popular education*” approach to meaningfully engage families and volunteers in a culturally familiar and interactive manner as we unpack our local education system and reimagine an equitable one.

We believe that culture is an important part of the life support system of a community. If a community's culture is respected and nurtured, the community's power will grow to make the needed changes in their own community and society at-large. We believe that effective community and institutional change happens when those who serve as agents of transformation understand the foundations of race and racism and how they continually function as a barrier to community self-determination and self-sufficiency.

Volunteers will be trained in all facets of Suffolk's educational system, and will serve as **mentors** to families in every home-school-home interactions (i.e. overcoming language, enrollment barriers, unfair suspensions). Volunteer mentors will be prepared to work with other parents from a strengths-based approach, to support other families as they gain the tools and knowledge to become **powerful** agents of change in the lives of their children, school community and the community at-large. PEEMP will be a "living program" that will continuously evolve and improve as families and volunteers:

- share their experience, reflect and look for patterns in the collective experience
- add information, research, and analysis to their understanding of the situation
- gain a level of awareness that will help them lead, create a plan and apply what they have learned to **action**

SUFFOLK FAMILIES NEED YOUR SUPPORT

- Volunteer mentors are asked to:
 - Commit to 9.5 hours of training
 - Program Overview and Understanding the Enrollment Process
 - Understanding Screening and Placement Process
 - Understanding School Climate and School's Disciplinary Process
 - Mentor at minimum of three (3) families during 2018-2019 academic year in developing an action plan that will help them overcome the barriers to education equity their children are confronted with and ensure their meaningful participation in their child's education.
 - Review intake and assignment instructions carefully
 - Fill out assignment & report forms and write narrative within two days of each encounter with a family
 - Provide the following information to Irma Solis, NYCLU-Suffolk Chapter Director no later than one week after each encounter with a family
 - Family's Action Plan
 - Completed Mentor Assignment and Report Form
 - Written Narrative
 - Attend quarterly support meetings with other Pathways to Education Equity Mentoring Program mentors during 2018-2019 academic year (November, February and June).

If you are interested in learning more about our program, please contact Irma Solis, Suffolk Chapter Director of the NYCLU-Suffolk Chapter 631-512-1587 or isolis@nyclu.org.



Through advocacy, litigation, education, and organizing, the Suffolk County Chapter of the NYCLU has engaged in work challenging oppressive policies and systems, defending and protecting the rights of marginalized communities, holding public institutions accountable to the people they serve, and sharing powerful tools and information with the public.