**Overarching project topic: Class size reduction within NYC public schools**

This year Mayor Bill de Blasio rolled out his greatly anticipated universal pre-K program opening 1,100 private, free, full-day preschools across the city’s 59 districts. While 53,000 kids can now get a jumpstart into their education, the program is sapping the education of children in grades K through three and onward.

Over the course of nine months, de Blasio successfully allotted $9.5 million to fund his initiative, a fraction of the amount that the class size reduction effort has received. While universal pre-K might seem like a win-win situation, it’s much needed space, money and attention has directly undermined class size reduction. The ratio of students to teachers among New York City’s public schools, which is a growing concern among parents and educators alike – and one which just last year warranted legal attention – has been increasingly steadily for years.

While both universal pre-K and class size reduction is part of a six-pronged citywide budget administered by the state, pre-K has received significantly more attention and tangible results. On the other hand, class size reduction, has received $160.3 million, 46 percent of total state funding, but has seen only hindrances and setbacks as ratios between students and teachers consistently increase annually. Community stakeholders including parents of students, school teachers and lobbyists have grown skeptical of the implementation of the sizeable class size reduction budget.

My project, then, would take the form of illustrating for readers why class size reduction is arguably just as important to a child’s education as is early education. I plan on pitching my project to the *New York Times* and also to *New York Daily News*. My three pitches are below:

1) How does the projected academic success of students in small class sizes who had no pre-K compare to the academic success of students who had pre-K but large class sizes?

* Result will be the same. Shows how important both are (but mostly how important class size reduction is and how much more attention it deserves)
  + <http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/C_Ruhm_Persistence_20071.pdf>
* Follow up could be hypothetical question:
  + How much smarter would elementary school kids be if they had all been enrolled in pre-K AND all had small class sizes?
  + What would happen if class size reduction had been de Blasio’s campaign head, rather than pre-K?
    - Analyze potential later financial returns, performance returns, psychological returns and compare to equivalent data set for pre-k kids
      * <http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/California_CSR_Fatih_Unlu.pdf>
      * http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Small-Classes-in-the-Early-Grades-Academic-Achievement-and-Graduating-From-High-School.pdf

2) How smart would NYC be in ten years if every child between 3-4 in NYC was enrolled in full-day pre-K today?

* i.e. look up projected test score increases if child was enrolled in pre-K
* Follow up question: How smart would NYC population become if every child could be taught in a smaller class?
  + Long-term effects of small classes on achievement in 8th grade
    - <http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Konstantopoulos_20091.pdf>
  + Effect of achievement in 8th grade on college enrollment/graduation

3) How much more money would the city have to spend to build enough schools so that pre-k could be separated from public schools?

* Follow up question: How overcrowded would public schools be in X years if full day pre-K continues to co-share classroom space with elementary schools?

**Potential studies**:

* + **Benefits of class size reduction on upper grades**: http://www.classsizematters.org/research-and-links/#benefits for the upper grades
  + **Benefits for post-secondary education**: http://www.classsizematters.org/research-and-links/#benefits for post-secondary education

**Data sets available (and I have NYSED excel spreadsheet containing data too)**

* + 2012 class sizes: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/pmf/2011-12/home.html