

## **TESTIMONY**

**Before the Council of the City of New York**

**Committee on Children and Youth**

**Oversight: Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's  
Concept Paper**

**Deputy Commissioner Susan Haskell**

**September 18, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Stevens, and members of the Committee on Children and Youth. I am DYCD Deputy Commissioner for Youth Services Susan Haskell. I am joined by Deputy Commissioner Denice Williams, and Assistant Commissioners Daniel Guillen and Jessica Raithel. We are pleased to discuss the COMPASS afterschool program and our plans for its expansion.

As Commissioner Howard discussed in the May Executive Budget Hearing, the COMPASS afterschool program, which launched 20 years ago with an initial investment of \$47 million, will grow to a record \$755 million program, with DYCD serving about 184,000 total youth by Fiscal Year 2028. On May 30, DYCD released a Concept Paper that included details about the expected program design.

### **Background on the COMPASS Program**

For the benefit of the Committee, I will share some background about the history of the program. COMPASS, which was formerly known as the Out-of-School Time (OST) Program, is comprised of over 890 programs serving young people enrolled in grades K-12. OST was the forerunner to COMPASS in 2014, which included a major expansion in programming for middle school youth, renamed School's Out New York City (SONYC). COMPASS is offered at no cost to families and operates in public schools, community centers, and other locations such as private schools and public housing sites.

Through community-based organizations, COMPASS offers high quality programs that have a balance of enrichment activities, including recreation, creative arts, STEAM and social-emotional learning to support and strengthen the overall development of youth. COMPASS aims to help young people build skills to support their academic achievement, raise their confidence and cultivate their leadership skills.

### **Expansion Plan and Concept Paper**

This concept paper is a commitment to the investment made by the Adams Administration and is the precursor to the RFP that will be released this fall. This expansion plan began with an immediate \$21 million investment in FY2026 that will bring 5,000 additional K-5 seats online this fall. COMPASS funding will grow to \$102 million in Fiscal Year 2027 and \$136 million by 2028. The plan will also raise provider rates starting in Fiscal Year 2027, with the new RFP awards, to stabilize the non-profit organizations operating COMPASS programs and to better support the workforce that serves New York City's children.

The Concept Paper proposes to raise the price per participant to \$6,800 for year-round elementary programs and \$3,900 for school year SONYC middle school programs. The Concept Paper also proposes to add program features including: Social and Emotional Learning, Introduction to Career and College options, Mentoring and Life Skills, and Mental Health Support. The Concept Paper emphasizes inclusion to ensure that youth with special needs can fully participate in enriching and supportive programs, alongside their peers. We are grateful to





**The Department of Youth & Community Development**

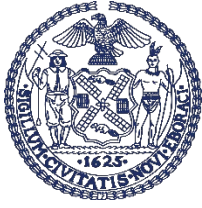
the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, along with disability advocates and subject matter experts. Their collaboration helped make this historic investment possible and informed the Concept Paper.

Between May 30 and July 11, DYCD conducted a robust stakeholder engagement process on the Concept Paper. DYCD facilitated 14 feedback sessions with 272 stakeholder attendees including providers, advocates, arts organizations, parent leaders, and most importantly, the young people themselves. We also appreciated the opportunity to engage this Committee. Additionally, DYCD received 567 submissions of written feedback. DYCD carefully reviewed the feedback, and we intend to incorporate stakeholder input into the RFP that will be released this fall.

Earlier this summer, DYCD announced the initial 40 program sites of this expansion, prioritizing underserved communities, including New Yorkers with disabilities, or living in high need neighborhoods. In consultation with NYC Public Schools (NYCPS), DYCD utilized a data-driven approach to select elementary schools for expansion. Considered were schools without a DYCD-funded program, schools with high economic need, and schools in communities with geographic service gaps. The new sites, on average, have larger concentrations of students with high economic need than our existing COMPASS portfolio and schools citywide. After these criteria were met, DYCD selected experienced COMPASS partners with the capacity to provide services this Fall. We will follow the same process to site the additional 10,000 slots for fall 2026. COMPASS programs are complemented by our 92 Beacon and 100 Cornerstone afterschool programs in community centers.

Finally, we were pleased that on August 29<sup>th</sup> Mayor Adams signed Executive Order 54, creating the Commission on Universal After-School. The commission will bring together cross-sector leaders from community based after-school providers, advocacy groups, philanthropy, and the business sector to develop a strategy to deliver a universal after-school system that is sustainable in the long term and ensures non-profit organizations have the tools they need to hire and train staff and deliver quality programming. We thank the members of the Commission lead by Chairs Grace Bonilla and Dennis Walcott and Executive Director Michael Nolan in helping achieve "After-School for All."

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide details on this historic investment in afterschool programs. We appreciate the strong support of the Council and the Committee in achieving this important milestone. We are pleased to answer your questions.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER  
1 CENTRE STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

BRAD LANDER  
COMPTROLLER

**Testimony of Lara Lai, Senior Policy Analyst and Strategic Organizer for Education  
New York City Council Committee on Children and Youth: Afterschool Expansion**

September 18, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair Stevens and members of the City Council Children and Youth Committee. My name is Lara Lai and I am the Senior Policy Analyst and Strategic Organizer for Education in the Office of NYC Comptroller Brad Lander. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today at this important hearing.

In support of your deliberations today on the administration's afterschool expansion, I will review the findings and recommendations from the two recent afterschool reports published by our office: [Stranded Afterschool](#) and [Afterschool for Some](#), and the afterschool survey of 627 school leaders conducted by our office this past spring.

While our geographic and demographic analysis of the current 5,000 seat 40 school rollout revealed inequities in seat placement and a lack of transparency on the metrics used to award seats across the City, today I will focus on afterschool for District 75 and students with disabilities. We found that in the new rollout, **no District 75 (D75) programs received any of the newly allocated afterschool seats.**

The lack of D75 seats follows the findings of our [Stranded After School](#) report in June that children with disabilities face a disproportionate lack of access to the free afterschool programs that many of their peers enjoy.

The lack of afterschool bus transportation is a major barrier to afterschool care citywide, posing a particular challenge for the 62,000 students with IEP mandated school bus transportation as well as students in temporary housing.

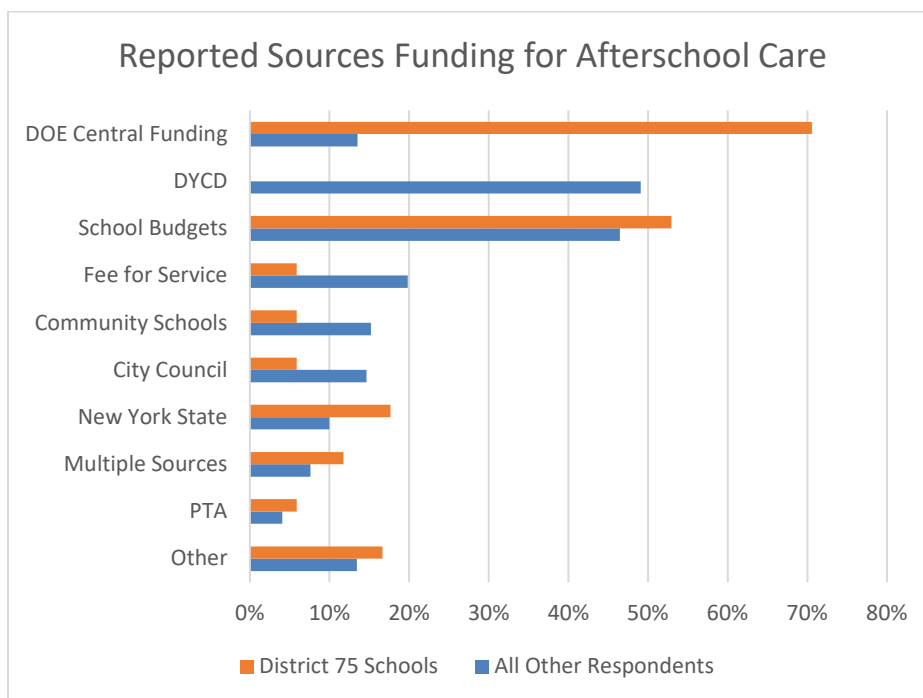
Another barrier identified by our survey is the way District 75 afterschool programs are funded and operated, which significantly constrains their ability to meet students' afterschool needs.

District 75 programs do not have access to the primary source of supplementary afterschool funding in the City: Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD).

**None of our District 75 respondents have DYCD funded afterschool programs compared to 49% of respondents from other schools.**



**Chart 1: Reported Funding Sources for Afterschool Programs**



Source: NYC Comptroller's Office

In a letter sent to the Comptroller on September 8 responding to our most recent afterschool report, DYCD Commissioner Keith Howard indicated that the COMPASS program would dramatically expand access to afterschool programming for students with disabilities. While we appreciate DYCD's commitment to equity, the COMPASS program's impact is likely to be very limited in scope. Most DYCD-funded and contracted community-based organizations (CBOs), which run 90% of afterschool programming in New York City according to our survey, are unable to meet the specialized needs of District 75 students. As a result, most District 75 schools must fund afterschool programming directly. District 75 staff also provide most of the afterschool services themselves and are typically paid through per session.

There are also inequities in City Council CASA grant allocations: only 6% of District 75 schools in our survey benefit from CASA grants, compared to 15% of other respondents. In addition, fee-for-service programs (where parents cover the costs) are less common in District 75 (6%) than among other respondents (20%).

To advance equity in access to afterschool, the Comptroller recommends a comprehensive strategy as the City designs and rolls out its universal afterschool program, including:

1. Increase City Council investment in CASA by \$10M per year for District 75 schools.
2. Create dedicated afterschool funding and contracts for District 75 programs.
3. Rebid DOE's school bus contracts to allow for afterschool bus transportation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today and for holding this important hearing. The Comptroller looks forward to partnering with the New York City Council to ensure that all our students get the support and resources they need to succeed and thrive in New York City.

September 8, 2025

The Honorable Brad Lander  
Office of the New York City Comptroller  
One Centre Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Comptroller Lander:

I am writing in response to your August 27, 2025 report, *Afterschool for Some: Assessing the Adams Administration's Flawed Rollout of the "Universal" Afterschool Expansion*.

Your findings do not capture the full picture of the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) after-school system, the data we used to select the initial 40 schools, or our prioritization of traditionally underserved communities in the city, including New Yorkers with disabilities or living in high need neighborhoods. Additionally, DYCD was not contacted to offer any input or context that would have provided a more accurate report reflecting the city's strategic plan to support young people and neighborhoods with the greatest needs.

The report ignores the reality that DYCD currently funds more than a thousand after-school programs across all five boroughs, including COMPASS, Beacon, and Cornerstone. This includes 325 COMPASS elementary school programs in communities that have historically had the most economic need. Districts 28 and 30 in Queens, which were cited in your analysis, currently have more than 3,300 seats in 25 DYCD-funded after-school programs (I attached a map of current and FY26 COMPASS elementary school programs for your reference). Because this is the first time the system has significantly expanded in over a decade, and community demographics have changed over time, deserts of after-school programming for communities most in need are concentrated in the Bronx and Queens. The first-round expansion added 15 schools in the Bronx, increasing schools with after-school programming by 20 percent. The 12 schools added in Queens boosted the number of schools with after-school programming by 17 percent.

At DYCD, we take pride in using data to inform our decisions and policies. However, the true value lies in our collaborative approach with key stakeholders, including real "on the ground thought partners" and career civil servants. In consultation with NYC Public Schools (NYCPS), our nonprofit partners, focus groups of parents and young people, and disability experts, DYCD utilized that data-driven approach to select elementary schools for expansion. Considered were schools without a DYCD-funded program contract, schools with high economic need, and schools in communities with geographic service gaps. After these criteria were met, DYCD and NYCPS selected nonprofit partners with the capacity to provide services this fall. The new sites, on average, have larger concentrations of students with high economic need than our existing COMPASS portfolio and schools citywide.

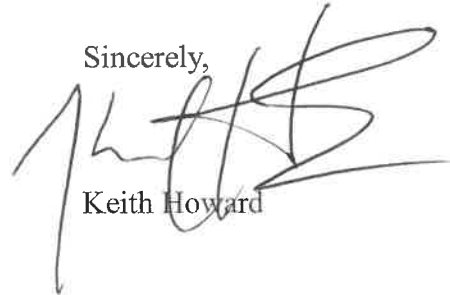
While no District 75 schools were selected in this round, all students within COMPASS school-based program sites—including those from co-located District 75 schools—have access to after-school activities. This inclusive expansion ensures that youth with special needs can fully participate in enriching, supportive programming alongside their peers. The initiative is expected to serve significantly more students with disabilities than the current citywide average. We are grateful to the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, along with disability advocates and subject matter experts, whose collaboration helped make this historic investment possible.

Lastly, the city does not control whether schools receive New York State Learning and Enrichment After-School Program Supports (LEAPS) or any other non-city funding. This administration is using what we can control—city dollars—to support this unprecedented expansion. All potential sites are under consideration as the administration rolls out an additional 15,000 new seats over the next two school years.

To begin that process, DYCD will soon release a Request for Proposals (RFP), based on a Concept Paper that elicited feedback from New Yorkers on what they would like to see in this next generation of after-school. In addition to providing even higher quality programming for young people, the goal of the RFP is to raise provider rates to stabilize the nonprofit organizations leading these programs, and better support the workforce who serve the city's youth. It also helps develop a sustainable, long-term system that ensures our nonprofit partners are able to continue to hire and train staff and deliver quality programming.

This is the first significant expansion of after-school in more than a decade. Together, let us celebrate this win for families. We remain committed to prioritizing communities with the highest need and lack of existing programs to help achieve Mayor Adams' vision of "After-School for All."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Howard", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Keith Howard





# Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

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## Testimony for New York City Council Committee on Children and Youth

### Re: Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper

September 18, 2025

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is May DePierro, and I am Policy Associate at Advocates for Children of New York (AFC). For more than 50 years, AFC has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. Every year, we help thousands of families navigate the New York City school system.

We are pleased that the City has committed to expanding access to after-school programs, with the goal of adding 20,000 new after-school seats over the next three school years. However, for many students who are currently left out of after-school programs, adding seats is not sufficient to provide access.

While the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) concept paper noted that contractors should “provide additional supports or services to enable full participation by those with special needs,” the City must do more to ensure students with disabilities can participate. Unfortunately, we have heard from families of students with disabilities who have been turned away from after-school programs with the explanation that the providers are not able to meet their needs.

This type of exclusion is unacceptable, and illegal. The City should develop a well-publicized process for parents to request the accommodations a student may need to participate in an after-school program; a system for making determinations with input from the parent; a form, similar to the Summer Rising accommodations form, to document the accommodations and supports that the student needs; and a process for the City to provide the needed accommodations and supports, including paraprofessionals. Responsibility for this process should lie with the City and not with individual community-based organizations, so that the process can be



standardized across all programs and the City can ensure that students with disabilities get the accommodations and support they need to participate. Furthermore, there must be resources available to provide such accommodations and support.

As the City works to expand after-school programs, it should ensure that programs are available to students with disabilities who attend District 1-32 schools, as well as to students with more intensive needs who attend District 75 specialized schools or who were placed in state-approved non-public schools by the City because of their disabilities. ***Stranded After School: Advancing Equity & Transportation Access for Students with Disabilities***, a report recently published by the Office of the NYC Comptroller, found that students attending District 75 schools are far less likely than students enrolled in District 1-32 schools to have after-school programs offered at their schools. The City should ensure that it is contracting with community-based organizations that are equipped to meet the needs of students in specialized schools for students with disabilities and should provide the needed support and resources to increase access to after-school programming for these students. In addition, the City should provide the training needed for all providers to understand the accommodations process and to better work with and fully include students with disabilities in after-school programs, including how to get additional assistance.

We also hear from families of students with disabilities, students in temporary housing, and students in foster care, who often attend school far from where they live and rely on bus service to get home, who cannot participate in after-school programs because bus service is only available at the end of the regular school day. In fact, the previously mentioned report from the NYC Comptroller's Office found that almost a third of the 627 school leaders surveyed identified the lack of school bus transportation as a major barrier to participation in after-school programming; of the respondents from District 75 schools, 100 percent indicated lack of busing as a barrier. By not providing these students with the transportation services to which they are entitled, the City is denying them equal access to after-school programs. Making matters even worse, students who get yellow bus service do not receive an OMNY card from their schools, meaning that even families who could pick up their children from after-school programs and accompany them home using public transportation may have to pay for public transportation costs.

Under both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the City must provide busing to and from after-school programs for students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans mandate bus service. The United States Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has stated that under the IDEA, "If the IEP Team has made that determination [that a student requires bus service on their IEP], then it should include transportation for required after-school activities, such as community service activities that are required by the school, as well as for activities necessary to afford the child an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities." See *U.S. Department of Education, Questions and Answers on Serving Children with Disabilities Eligible for Transportation* at E-1, Nov. 2009, [https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/OMB\\_08-0101\\_Transportation-11-4-09\\_FINAL-1.pdf](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/OMB_08-0101_Transportation-11-4-09_FINAL-1.pdf).



Similarly, the City has a legal obligation to provide bus service to allow students in temporary housing to participate in after-school programming. New York State Education Law requires that school districts provide transportation to students in temporary housing so they can participate in extracurricular activities if the lack of transportation poses a barrier to their participation. Education Law § 3209(4)(f); *see also U.S. Department of Education, Education of Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance* at J-11, Aug. 2018, <https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/2020/07/160240ehcyguidanceupdated082718.pdf>.

The City must commit to fulfilling its legal obligation to provide students who have a right to transportation to and from school with access to bus service or alternative, workable transportation from after-school programs. The City has indicated that it must rebid the 45-year-old school bus contracts in order to add after-school bus service, and we urge the City to rebid the contracts as soon as possible to make much-needed improvements including the addition of after-school bus service.

The City will not be able to realize the Mayor's vision of "after-school for all" unless it ensures that programs are equipped to meet the needs of all students and that students who rely on bus service have a way to get home.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.





NYC Arts in Education Roundtable  
Kimberly Olsen, Executive Director

Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper  
Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair  
Thursday, September 18, 2025

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper.

My name is Kimberly Olsen, and I am the Executive Director of the NYC Arts in Education Roundtable — a nonprofit arts service organization working to improve and advance NYC arts education in partnership with thousands of arts educators and more than 350 arts organizations each year. I'm here as part of the *It Starts with the Arts* coalition to advocate for the crucial role of arts education in afterschool programs.

Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development. I have seen firsthand how arts education impacts young people. As a teaching artist in the afterschool space for many years, I've had students come to school because they knew we would be working on our original play inspired by Rosa Parks. I've seen students with emerging English language skills, stand confidently in front of a room and choreograph a dance for their peers. By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people and help them develop 21st-century life skills.

New York City's existing arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource in this work. Existing models like NYCPS Arts Partnership Grants and the City Council's CASA Program, provide strong examples of how artists and our city's world-class arts organizations can be partners in creating enriching afterschool programs.

I urge the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Shift the focus from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) to recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP:** DYCD's RFP for afterschool programs must explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components and recognize the costs associated with providing professional arts instruction (full cost estimated at \$20k-30k for the school year). DYCD should also ensure that arts programming is delivered by qualified teaching artists and/or arts

organizations to guarantee the highest quality of direct service while offering employment opportunities to NYC's cultural workforce.

- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage partnerships with local arts organizations and artists to fill Activity Specialist roles with highly-qualified Teaching Artists. Uplift available opportunities to subcontract through afterschool matching fairs, target information campaign, and/or partnership with NYC Department of Cultural Affairs.
- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Arts is a proven medium for helping youth develop SEL skills, with clear documented research on the intersection of arts education and competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of these recommendations. Investing in arts education is an investment in our future, and a crucial component of a comprehensive afterschool expansion strategy.



## HELPING KIDS GROW ONE MOVE AT A TIME

**Thursday, September 18, 2025**

**Committee on Children and Youth, Althea V. Stevens Chairperson  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**

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Jenny Ingber, Ph.D.,  
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Chess in the Schools is a 501(c)(3)  
not-for-profit educational organization

Thank you, Councilmember Stevens, and thank you to the Committee on Children and Youth for holding this hearing regarding the upcoming DYCD Concept Paper and COMPASS RFP. My name is Jenny Ingber, and I am the CEO of Chess in the Schools. Thank you for also being incredible supporters of our work in NYC Schools. I am testifying today as an afterschool provider with the niche expertise of teaching chess to children and to express sincere excitement about the potential of this new Citywide endeavor.

In examining the Concept Paper, there is a focus on academic disciplines, such as STEM and Literacy, as well as Social Emotional Learning. There is also an expectation of “other optional activities.” With the academic disciplines expected, we, at Chess in the Schools, will not have the capacity to apply as a primary community-based organization for this work. We do have the potential to work as a subcontractor.

Currently, we have 48 after-school clubs across the City, 24 of which are already on the COMPASS List. We also have our Digital Program at 14 schools on the COMPASS List. From our research so far, at least 29 different CBOs provide after-school programming among our partner schools.

With this background and running a program that is in its 39th year partnering with DOE schools, I come with a few recommendations for the RFP:

1. **Provide systems for matchmaking vetted DYCD contractors with CBOs applying for funding.** We get considerable Council discretionary funding through DYCD and want to maintain our current programs and build or strengthen partnerships with CBOs or nonprofits already in our schools. Currently, our relationships with CBOs vary from school to school, but our afterschool offerings are primarily through the school rather than directly with the afterschool CBO. We would also welcome opportunities to subcontract through this program at additional schools.
2. **Provide flexibility for CBOs that obtain funding to change subcontractors annually,** rather than needing to commit to a full slate of partners for the duration of a multiyear contract.
3. **Allow for subcontractors to serve as professional development providers and/or direct service providers.**

Chess in the Schools is uniquely positioned to partner with CBOs to provide chess education and competition in afterschool programming. We hire chess educators who know the discipline, play themselves and teach for us, not only as afterschool coaches, but weekly during the school day following a 32-week curriculum. We provide significant in-house professional development to our team on social-emotional learning using the CASEL framework and on interdisciplinary connections, especially to mathematics. We hold an asset-based approach to working with children and youth, highlighting their brilliance and potential while working in communities that often are not embraced in this way. Over 85% of our students qualify for Title I funding. Some of our educators have over 20 years of experience teaching chess classes in public schools. In 2024-2025 we coached nearly 1000 New York City students in chess during our afterschool programs. Each





## HELPING KIDS GROW ONE MOVE AT A TIME

club meets weekly for 1.5-2 hours at our partner schools and generally begin in October and run through June. Club participants in after-school programs are encouraged to compete in our free Chess in the Schools tournaments. These tournaments are free to all participants regardless of school or whether they are in Chess in the Schools programs. In 2024-2025 we held 25 tournaments with a total of 8427 participants. Last year, we began researching our school programs, and our initial analyses indicate that chess-playing students in Chess in the Schools classes demonstrate gains in mathematics in comparison to students who did not participate in chess classes, further indicating the enrichment value to the STEM-focused DYCD afterschool programming being sought. Importantly, parents seek out opportunities for their children to learn and play chess as it is a game that can be accessible to any child and supports soft skills like strategic thinking, executive function, patience, time management, and perseverance. Simply, chess is excellent for children and youth and would be a valuable activity for inclusion in citywide after-school programs.

Many organizations, like ours, offer niche expertise that greatly enhances children's and youth's experiences in and out of school, and we anticipate these recommendations will also benefit them. We are enthusiastic about the possibilities of partnering with schools and CBOs as a subcontractor and hope the RFP can provide guidelines that will support our ability to navigate the new system, be identified as a good partner, and ultimately continue to provide high-quality programming after school time.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jenny D. Ingber, Ph.D.  
President & CEO  
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## CIS Program Summary

2024-2025 School Year

Current as of: 2025-07-01

Program Year: 2024-2025

(1) ▾

School Borough ▾



### TOTAL STUDENTS SERVED:

13,699

INCLUDES IN-SCHOOL, DIGITAL, TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS FROM CIS SCHOOLS,  
TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS FROM NON-CIS SCHOOLS AND SUMMER CAMP

IN-CLASS STUDENTS 4,394

CLUB STUDENTS 935

DIGITAL STUDENTS 4,171

### TOTAL SCHOOLS:

60

INCLUDES IN-SCHOOL, DIGITAL, SUMMER CAMP

### SCHOOLS SERVED TWICE A WEEK:

4

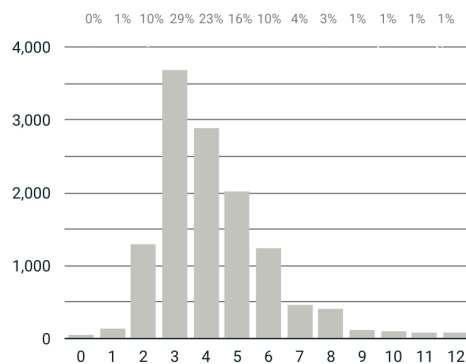
### NUMBER OF TEACHERS TRAINED

57

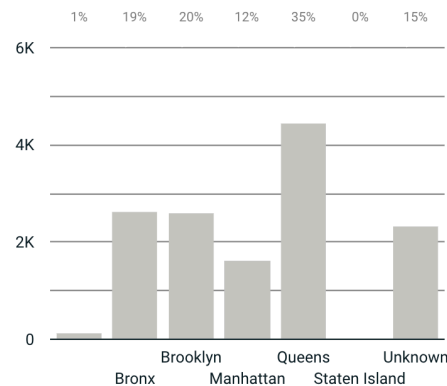
### NUMBER OF TOURNAMENTS

25

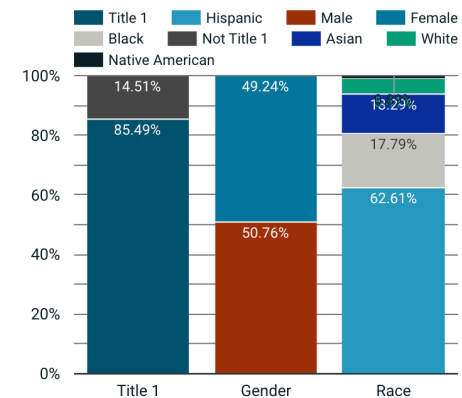
### Students by Grade



### Students by Borough



### Student Demographics\*



\* Does not include tournament participants or summer camp.



**New York City Council, Children and Youth Committee  
Oversight Hearing on Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper  
Submitted Testimony by Sarah Jonas, Vice President of Youth  
September 18, 2025**

Thank you to Chair Althea Stevens, the Children and Youth Committee, and the New York City Council for the opportunity to present testimony for the oversight hearing on afterschool expansion and DYCD's concept paper. My name is Sarah Jonas and I am Vice President of the Youth Division at Children's Aid.

For over 170 years, Children's Aid has been committed to ensuring that there are no boundaries to the aspirations of young people, and no limits to their potential. By offering a continuum of services throughout childhood, Children's Aid prepares young people to succeed at every level of education and every milestone of life. Today, nearly 2,000 dedicated full and part time staff members serve over 36,000 children, youth, and families across more than 40 sites, with a strong presence in Harlem, Washington Heights, the South Bronx, and Staten Island's north shore. Through our early childhood centers, community schools, community hubs, and health clinics, Children's Aid creates trusted spaces where families can access the full range of supports they need, close to home.

Children's Aid is a member of the Campaign for Children, the New York State Network for Youth Success, the New York State Community Schools Network, the New York City Coalition for Community School Excellence, and the Coalition for Equitable Education Funding. As a member of these networks and alliances, we support their policy agendas. Together, we are on a mission to connect children with what they need to learn, grow, and lead successful, independent lives.

**Children's Aid's Afterschool Programs**

Children's Aid operates 17 DYCD COMPASS and SONYC afterschool programs, serving over 3,100 youth. These programs take place in our five community centers and across the majority of our 19 community schools.

Afterschool programs are a critical lifeline for New York City families, forming the foundation of their support systems. These programs address pressing issues such as learning loss, social-emotional development, workforce readiness, and the need for reliable hours to support working parents. According to the Afterschool Alliance, 90% of parents report that their child's afterschool program helps them interact with peers and develop social skills, while 82% say it boosts their confidence and 73% say it fosters





responsible decision-making. Moreover, regular attendance in quality afterschool programs is linked to higher standardized test scores and improved school attendance.

The evidence is clear: high-quality, well-funded, and accessible programs delivered by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in partnership with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) are essential to our youth's success.

However, as a provider of seventeen afterschool programs, we know these programs can only succeed if contracts allow providers to fairly compensate staff, reduce unnecessary administrative burdens, and offer programs that meet the full range of community needs. Just as important, new afterschool seats must be allocated equitably, with consideration for high-need neighborhoods and District 75 schools. Without intentional planning, we risk leaving behind the very communities where afterschool is most needed.

Recognizing that the last COMPASS and SONYC Requests For Procurement (RFP) was released in 2015, Children's Aid sees this as a critical moment to ensure that future contracts give providers the rates and resources needed to offer children and families the full benefits of high-quality afterschool programs. With that in mind, we propose that DYCD make the following modifications to the upcoming RFP and afterschool expansion plan.

### **Per Participant Rates**

High-quality and sustainable afterschool programs are made possible through competitive, above-minimum wage salaries for program staff. Without fair compensation, community-based organizations (CBOs) cannot recruit or retain the skilled staff needed to serve young people effectively.

For years, COMPASS and SONYC providers have operated programs under repeated contract extensions, without the opportunity to adjust per participant rates to reflect the true cost of programs. Currently, most COMPASS programs are contracted at base rates of just \$2,800 to \$3,200 per participant—less than half of the true cost of operation. As a result, providers face a difficult choice: either divert funds from other sources to cover program costs, or pay staff wages that do not reflect their skills and level of responsibility. Because the network of afterschool CBOs range in size and financial flexibility, insufficient rates result in inequities across the programming children and families receive. And, these challenges are only exacerbated in a climate where CBOs face increased uncertainty from both public and private funding sources. If the City is serious about expanding its afterschool network equitably, per-participant rates must be

raised to reflect the real cost of service delivery and ensure all providers can offer high-quality programs.

A 2023 analysis from United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) revealed the true cost of running COMPASS and SONYC programs as follows:

- \$6,600 per participant for school-year (e.g 36 week) COMPASS programs
- \$10,700 per participant for full-year COMPASS programs
- \$5,500 per participant for school-year (e.g. 36 week) SONYC programs
- \$7,700 per participant for full-year SONYC programs

These cost calculations assume a 10 to 1 child staff ratio for students under 10, and a 15 to 1 staff ratio for children for children over 10. They also assume hourly wages that are at least \$22 to align with rates for NYCPS staff in comparable positions (e.g. substitute paraprofessionals in Summer Rising) and to be competitive with retail positions, which range from \$17-20 an hour. Offering competitive, above minimum wage salaries would protect CBOs from losing frontline staff to government or private-sector employers, minimizing staff turnover and allowing providers to build a more stable workforce.

While the Concept Paper acknowledges the need for increased funding in comparison to 2015 rates, the proposed rates still fall significantly short of the costs of operation in F27 and onward. The paper sets per participant rates for full-year COMPASS programs at \$6,800 and school-year SONYC programs at \$3,900, with no clarified proration for school-year COMPASS or full-year SONYC programs and no built in cost escalators.

**Under these proposed rates, COMPASS and SONYC providers will recover roughly sixty to seventy percent of program costs in the first year, with this gap only widening as expenses rise over time.**

We urge the agency to raise the base rate to reflect the actual cost of staffing and operations in year one and to incorporate annual adjustments tied to a benchmark (such as the City's human services COLA or the Consumer Price Index) or through modest step increases built into the contract term. Without these adjustments, the City risks undermining the very programs it seeks to strengthen, leaving families without reliable afterschool options and widening inequities across our communities.

### **Staffing and Subcontracting**

Just as paying staff competitive wages is essential to running high-quality afterschool programs, staffing and subcontracting expectations must also be clear, practical, and aligned with compensation levels. We appreciate that the concept paper provides a thorough breakdown of the qualifications and requirements for each staff position.

At the same time, several of the proposed requirements risk creating new staffing and operational challenges:

- **Content Specialist Role:** In comparison to the previous education specialist position, this role now requires two years of supervisory experience. This requirement may exclude otherwise strong candidates with relevant experience, including teaching credentials.
- **Group Leaders:** Once considered entry level, this role now requires two years of direct experience working with children under thirteen, without additional responsibility or a presumed wage increase. This shift effectively removes the position as a true entry point for new staff.
- **Youth Worker:** Because staff under 18 cannot count toward SACC ratios, this role already has limited utility. Adding further requirements—such as a diploma/GED or prior experience—only restricts the pipeline unnecessarily. For this reason, qualifications for youth workers should remain as minimal as possible.
- **Janitors, security guards and front desk receptionists:** The additional staffing requirements for center-based programs, including janitors, security guards, and front desk receptionists, while necessary, impose significant new costs on providers.

Given the challenges providers already face staffing these low-wage positions and building a youth worker pipeline, we advise the agency to avoid inflating any hiring requirements absent significant per participant rate increases to cover added costs. If such rate increases are not feasible, the more cost-effective and sustainable approach is to strengthen staff capacity through professional development and training opportunities.

Finally, the recommendation to dedicate 10% of program budgets to specialist subcontractors would add unnecessary administrative burden. While we strongly support integrating outside professionals to enhance programming, making this a mandatory budgetary requirement undermines provider flexibility and strains limited resources. We urge DYCD to provide greater flexibility in staffing and subcontracting requirements to enable providers to deliver high-quality programs effectively and efficiently.

## **Mental Health**

Recognizing the scale of mental health challenges faced by young people today and the important role afterschool programs can play in addressing these needs, we are pleased that mental health supports are now considered a key component of COMPASS and

SONYC programs. Children's Aid remains committed to addressing the mental health needs of the youth we serve, either by providing direct support at sites staffed with licensed mental health practitioners or connecting youth with services through trusted community referrals.

At the same time, the approach outlined in the concept paper presents safety and administrative challenges for providers. The paper requires programs to designate at least one staff member responsible for providing on-site supports in a crisis and for facilitating ongoing social-emotional learning (SEL) and wellness groups. However, the paper does not specify the credentials or training required for this designated staff person. We strongly caution against assigning unlicensed or uncertified staff to manage crisis situations or make decisions regarding youth mental health. We urge the agency to either clearly define and adequately compensate a staff role equipped to handle these responsibilities or to reduce the responsibility to provide direct mental health services and, instead, support providers in developing robust referral protocols and networks.

### **Evaluation and Data Protocols**

We appreciate the agency's commitment to holding providers accountable to key metrics to ensure program efficacy. Programs have historically been evaluated primarily on enrollment and participation (ROP) rates. The new concept paper continues to hold a high standard for enrollment and participation, while also asking providers to devise systems to measure Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) outcomes.

While Children's Aid is deeply committed to strong enrollment, our center-based programs face unique challenges compared to school-based programs. The lack of integration into the school day and competing demands from school-based academic interventions, extracurriculars, and mandated activities—many of which overlap with afterschool hours—all affect participation. And, while center-based programs could employ additional measures to incentivize consistent attendance, such efforts could unintentionally discourage students from taking advantage of valuable school-based opportunities. For these reasons, we ask the agency to consider employing differentiated targets or more flexible ROP formulas for center-based programming.

Further, we appreciate the addition of SEL metrics, as this will allow providers to share more holistic outcomes with the agency. However, providers also need greater capacity to manage and analyze the data required under this new evaluation framework. Accurate and timely data entry is critical for meeting metrics and avoiding Site Accountability Plans (SAPs). To that end, we recommend that upcoming RFPs include funding for a part-time or full-time dedicated data specialist or data entry role. We believe that a staff member based at the program site would be best positioned to

manage data, support continuous improvement, and analyze tools like the SEL survey to strengthen programming.

Together, these changes—a differentiated approach to ROP targets for center-based programs and the addition of dedicated support for data management—would create an evaluation system that is both fair and effective. Giving providers more tools and flexibility for evaluation promises to generate meaningful insights for both providers and the agency.

### **Equitable Access to afterschool Programs**

As the administration and DYCD identify locations for COMPASS and SONYC expansion, we also urge the agency to take this moment to consider how to increase accessibility and equity among the city's network of afterschool programs.

A recent report issued by the office of the New York City comptroller revealed that the locations of the forty newly identified afterschool sites are not proportionately aligned with the economic need index. Notably, no new sites were identified in Harlem or Washington Heights—two high-need areas served by Children's Aid—as well as in other high-need neighborhoods across Queens and Brooklyn. The report also found that no new sites were designated in District 75 schools, which serve students with disabilities who require specialized instructional support.

To address these gaps, we urge DYCD to ensure new programs are accessible to all students and families that need them. In addition to locating programs in high needs neighborhoods and across district 75 schools, this effort must also include reliable busing at the conclusion of afterschool programs, as well as the provision of necessary accommodations and services for students with disabilities; DYCD and NYCPS must coordinate to guarantee that the supports students receive during the school day extend seamlessly into afterschool hours.

### **Alignment with NYCPS Programs and Summer Rising**

Children's Aid supports the efforts of NYCReads and NYCSolves, and we welcome any opportunity to ensure our afterschool programs advance critical literacy and math skills. To that end, we encourage DYCD to incorporate clear requirements and high quality training opportunities for providers to implement NYCReads and NYCSolves aligned activities and materials.

Recognizing that many SONYC programs are year-round, we also urge the agency to provide instruction on whether and how SONYC programming should align with





Summer Rising. Providers are eager to partner with DYCD and NYCPS on these initiatives, but can only do so with clear guidance.

### **Conclusion**

Serving NYC's network of afterschool programs is a critical part of our mission to help children in poverty succeed and thrive. We are grateful to City leaders for highlighting afterschool expansion as a priority for working families and to DYCD for continuing to partner with us in providing our families with comprehensive and high-quality youth development programs. Further, we sincerely thank Chair Althea Stevens, the Children and Youth Committee, and the New York City Council for giving providers this important opportunity to share our perspective on the next COMPASS and SONYC RFP. We look forward to seeing how the ideas shared in this hearing are implemented and continuing to partner on expanding and strengthening our city's network of afterschool programs.

Please feel free to contact Annie Nelson at [anelson@childrensaidnyc.org](mailto:anelson@childrensaidnyc.org) with any questions regarding this testimony.

**Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.  
Testimony at the New York City Council Children & Youth Committee  
Honorable Althea Stevens, Chair  
September 18th, 2025**

Thank you Chair Stevens and members of the City Council for the opportunity to testify. The mission of the Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc. (CPC) is to promote social and economic empowerment of Chinese American, immigrant, and low-income communities. CPC was founded in 1965 as a grassroots, community-based organization in response to the end of the Chinese Exclusion years and the passing of the Immigration Reform Act of 1965. For 60 years, our services have expanded since our founding to include three key program areas: education, family support, and community and economic empowerment.

CPC is the largest Asian American social service organization in the U.S., providing vital resources to more than 80,000 people per year through more than 50 programs at over 30 sites across Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. CPC employs over 700 staff whose comprehensive services are linguistically accessible, culturally sensitive, and highly effective in reaching low-income and immigrant individuals and families. With the firm belief that social service can incite social change, CPC strives to empower our constituents as agents of social justice, with the overarching goal of advancing and transforming communities.

To that end, we are grateful to testify about issues that impact the individuals and families we serve, and we are grateful to the Council for their leadership on these issues particularly in response to the Afterschool Expansion & DYCD's COMPASS Concept Paper.

Back in July of 2025, CPC submitted our response to the concept paper and we wanted to share it with the Council as we work together over the next year to ensure these recommendations are implemented.

CPC currently operates 6 COMPASS Elementary programs at schools across Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. These afterschool programs have empowered local youth for decades by providing a safe, supportive, and friendly environment informed by best practices and sixty years of experience working closely with youth and families. Last year, our programs served over 1,000 participants. As a longtime partner of DYCD and provider of COMPASS programs, CPC is pleased to respond to DYCD's COMPASS Programs Concept Paper 2025.

The proposed program models described in the concept paper provide continuity by asking afterschool programs to focus on academics, STEM, literacy, physical fitness, and family engagement. Although the proposed price per participant has been increased from prior RFPs, the concept paper also outlined additions and changes in the areas of mental health supports, social and emotional learning, college and career preparedness, subcontracting, professional development, and summer programming that will further strain already thin program budgets.

We encourage DYCD to increase the price per participant (PPP) for year-round COMPASS Elementary programs to \$10,728 and the PPP for year-round SONYC programs to \$7,682 to reflect the importance of afterschool programs to the wellbeing, growth, and development of New York City's children and families as well as to fairly compensate staff and fully cover the increasing cost of delivering services. We suggest that DYCD also invest in center-based programs with an adjusted rate that accounts for additional costs that come with running a

center-based program. Furthermore, both COMPASS and SONYC must be offered as a full year-round program option in order to sufficiently support the youth development workforce, children, and families.

We also urge DYCD to extend the timeframe for submission for the upcoming RFP process. The 5-week timeframe suggested in the concept paper is not enough for prospective contractors to prepare thoughtful proposals that will lead to high-quality programming. 5 weeks is significantly shorter than the 12 weeks on average that COMPASS and SONYC RFPs have allowed in the past. For example, the 2018 RFP cohort of COMPASS school-based sites had a 8-week response period (extended to 20 weeks). The 2015 RFP cohort of school-based COMPASS sites had a 6-week response period (extended to 7 weeks), and the 2014 SONYC Expansion RFP had a 7.5-week timeline (extended to 8.5 weeks).

We suggest that the upcoming RFP process reflects these precedents while also accounting for the additional factors of ongoing technical issues with PASSPort and limited capacity of MOCS. With over 800 expected COMPASS sites in competition, and even more applicants, the proposed RFP process could overload city capacity. To address these challenges, we recommend that the RFP process be staggered so that each program model (e.g., SONYC RFP and COMPASS Elementary RFP) has a separate RFP timeline with at least 10 weeks to respond.

Finally, CPC has the following suggestions regarding the program model to ensure that the upcoming RFP process results in COMPASS programs that are ready to serve New York City's children and families:

#### **Staffing:**

- The concept paper replaces the Education Specialist with the Content Specialist role and adds significant experience requirements that will pose an obstacle to hiring for providers. These requirements also duplicate the Program Director role, causing salary parity concerns. We suggest that the qualifications for the Content Specialist role be reduced from 3 years of experience to 1-2 years of experience and supervisory experience be optional.
- We ask DYCD to maintain the optional teaching experience and educational background of the Content Specialist to ensure NYCPS school day alignment. This will also help ensure the Content Specialist remains distinct from the Activity Specialist and supports academic excellence.
- We encourage allowing the Content Specialist to serve 4 sites, as the Education Specialist currently can (COMPASS Programs Guide, p. 17), rather than the maximum of 3 sites proposed in the concept paper.
- For center-based programs operating at NYCHA or other city-owned buildings, certain roles such as reception, security, janitorial, and maintenance staff are already in place and paid for by city agencies. DYCD should allow flexibility where existing infrastructure already meets the proposed staffing requirements.

#### **Mental Health Support:**

The concept paper proposes that providers will be required to have partnerships with mental health services providers and practitioners to whom they can make referrals (including for crisis cases). In our experience, potential partners, most of whom already have limited capacity, are

hesitant to agree to this kind of partnership without a funded subcontract—another large cost that will weigh on providers.

The proposed mental health supports will put a burden on program staff, who do not have the qualifications and experience required. We suggest that the responsibilities of staff be limited to making referrals only and that staff not be asked to make assessments or decisions needed to engage in interventions. We are concerned the mental health specialist role and referral plan will not meet the strict staff licensing and credential requirements of New York.

City and New York State laws pertaining to mental health assessment, intervention, and treatment of minors, nor meet HIPAA and New York State protected health information (PHI) and Article 31 requirements. It raises serious liability risks for participants, program staff, families, DYCD and NYCPS staff, and community stakeholders.

### **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):**

According to the concept paper, programs will be required to adopt an SEL framework, but it is not clear if providers will be asked to prioritize the use of the same SEL framework as their school partners. Programs should be allowed to choose between the SEL framework used by their school partner and other SEL frameworks that are a fit for their participants.

### **Minimum Dosage/Hours of Attendance:**

Currently the minimum dosage rates are 80% attendance for COMPASS Elementary programs and 60% for SONYC programs. CPC suggests that DYCD consider lowering these levels to 70% for COMPASS Elementary and 50% for SONYC.

### **College/Career Readiness:**

The concept paper states that programs will be required to include career and college readiness activities. Such programming should be optional, especially for COMPASS Elementary programs, as it has limited relevance for younger age groups. CPC suggests that DYCD also provides a list of acceptable models/curricula.

### **Subcontracting:**

Rather than require programs to spend a minimum of 10% of the budget on subcontractors, subcontracting should be optional to give providers operational and budgetary flexibility.

### **M/WBE Procurement:**

Community-based organizations/nonprofits are not eligible to be M/WBEs; however, they make up a large portion of current COMPASS and SONYC subcontractors and vendors. While CPC strongly supports M/WBE participation, we urge DYCD to ensure that high-performing current partners are not excluded solely based on certification status.

We ask that DYCD provide an M/WBE provider list that meets the needs of COMPASS and SONYC, sortable by category such as STEM, Literacy, sports/physical fitness, arts and theater, etc.

### **Professional Development:**

The concept paper outlines how front-line staff will be required to participate in 3 hours per week of professional development. This requirement will quickly tip part-time staff into full-time benefits eligibility at many agencies, burdening already tight program budgets and the busy schedules of staff who are balancing part-time work with college courses. To stay within the price per participant, we strongly recommend that the professional development requirement be reduced or made more flexible (e.g., a certain number of hours per year rather than per week, and within SACC guidelines).

### **Summer Programming:**

The concept paper suggests that funding for summer programming for SONYC programs will not be part of this RFP process, potentially leaving programs with only 9 months of funding. In addition to impacting the immediate sustainability of programs, this will hinder long-term efforts to professionalize the afterschool sector and to create meaningful career pathways. SONYC must be a full year-round program included in the next RFP.

The concept paper mentions Summer Rising as an example of a model for summer programming; it is unclear if other options are available. Providers should be able to choose which model they use for summer programming (e.g., Summer Rising, traditional summer camp) in order to better serve their families and children.

Summer Rising has dramatically expanded the number of participants served. If programs are expected to continue to be able to serve such high numbers of participants, this will be at odds with SACC regulations, which call for a lower child-staff ratio. To continue to meet SACC regulations, providers will need more staff, especially for younger grades, impacting the budget.

In summary, CPC strongly recommends the following:

- Increase the price per participant for year-round COMPASS Elementary programs to \$10,728 and the price per participant for year-round SONYC programs to \$7,682, as well as provide an increased rate for center-based programs.
- Provide more flexibility on requirements regarding mental health, social and emotional learning, college and career preparedness, subcontracting and M/WBE procurement, professional development, and summer programming.
- Offer both SONYC and COMPASS as a year-round program to better support the youth development workforce and NYC's children and families.

In the context of PASSPort issues since November 2023's update and MOCS staff shortages, we also urge DYCD to:

- Stagger the application process so that each program model has its own RFP with different deadlines (e.g., SONYC School-based RFP, COMPASS School-based RFP, COMPASS Center-based RFP).
- Extend the submission timeframe of the upcoming RFP to at least 10 weeks for each cohort RFP or 20 weeks for an all-inclusive COMPASS Elementary and SONYC RFP.

We look forward to working in partnership with DYCD and the Council to ensure that we create an equitable workforce all while ensuring that our young people are getting the resources and quality education that they deserve. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.



If there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Elizabeth Hendler, Director of Institutional Advancement at [ehendler@cpc-nyc.org](mailto:ehendler@cpc-nyc.org) and/or Ashley Chen, Policy & Research Manager at [achen9@cpc-nyc.org](mailto:achen9@cpc-nyc.org).

## **Testimony in Support of Accessible Afterschool Expansion**

September 19, 2025

To the Committee on Children and Youth:

My name is Molly Senack, and I am testifying today on behalf of the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) as their Education and Employment Community Organizer. This testimony is supported by Sharon McLennon Wier, Ph.D., MEd., CRC, LMHC, Executive Director of CIDNY.

Students with disabilities are consistently denied access to the parts of school that are designed to be fun: buses don't run past 4pm, which means that 43% of students who rely on these buses and do not have access to alternative methods of transportation are often unable to participate in school programs or extracurricular activities that exceed that time. Students with disabilities don't get to participate in weekend activities, or the recreation-centered afternoon portion of Summer Rising. This exclusion is a tremendous disservice to students with disabilities.

While we appreciate the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) expansion of afterschool programming, we are concerned by the limited and vague references to accessibility in the concept paper they recently released. Afterschool programming, in addition to providing access to certain recreational activities, also can offer students additional educational instruction, supports, and opportunities. Unfortunately, students with disabilities are too often denied access to these benefits (according to a [report released by the NYC Comptroller's office](#) this summer, more than a quarter of District 75 schools lack afterschool programming entirely), whether it be due to a lack of transportation or due to the program being unable to provide the student with the necessary accommodations.


Addressing this inequity is critical step to achieving the "after-school for all" universality the City says it is working towards. We therefore ask that as plans to improve and expand afterschool programming go forward the following be included:

- **Increased investments in staffing**, including the creation of incentives for special education teachers and paraprofessionals to participate in extended day programming,
- **Cultural competency training** to ensure students' needs are addressed as effectively as possible,
- **Investments in outreach strategies** to ensure that the families of students with disabilities are well-informed regarding their afterschool options,
- **A standardized and centralized system for families to request resources and supports**,

- And, because busing is so integral to access, that the City **begin the process of rebidding outdated bus contracts** by ensuring the shortest possible extension of the current ones (no longer than one year), until the State passes the legislation necessary ([S1018/A440](#)) to among other things, allow busing to continue after 4pm.

We thank the Council for their time, and for their efforts to ensure that students with disabilities are not overlooked when exploring potential improvements to this crucial programming.

Sincerely,

Molly Senack (She/Her)  
Education and Employment Community Organizer  
Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York  
Email: [msenack@cidny.org](mailto:msenack@cidny.org) 

**Testimony of Caitlyn Passaretti**  
**Citizens' Committee for Children of New York**  
**Submitted to The New York City Council Committee on Children and Youth**  
**Oversight Hearing – Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper.**  
**September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Since 1944, Citizens' Committee for Children of New York has served as an independent, multi-issue child advocacy organization. CCC does not accept or receive public resources, provide direct services, or represent a sector or workforce; our priority is improving outcomes for children and families through civic engagement, research, and advocacy. We document the facts, engage and mobilize New Yorkers, and advocate for solutions to ensure that every New York child is healthy, housed, educated, and safe.

### **Overview**

After school programs and youth services support social, behavioral, educational, mental, and vocational well-being through structured extra-curricular programs. These programs can include academic support, sports, work experience, leadership opportunities, and recreation. They help youth learn critical skills they need to succeed throughout their lives. After school and summer programs can enrich what students learn in school, foster positive relationships with peers and family, and provide meaningful experiences. Programs are often in schools and community-based organizations, and these services are most needed during after-school hours and in the summer. Among many positive benefits, these services can provide supervised care so parents can work, provide children and youth with prosocial and academic programs, introduce students to new opportunities, experiences, and activities, and keep youth in a safe environment that discourage them from engaging in risky behavior. Research shows that \$1 invested in youth services creates \$3 in savings for participants and taxpayers.<sup>i</sup>

### **Challenges with the Universal Afterschool Rollout**

The recent Comptroller report on the rollout of universal afterschool provides important context for this hearing.<sup>ii</sup> This report finds an inequitable distribution of the 5000 seats promised as part of the Mayor's afterschool expansion initiative. The main findings are:

- No District 75 schools received additional afterschool seats, even though these schools already have less seats than their counterparts
- Only two school in all of Manhattan received additional afterschool seats, and they were both charter schools

- In Brooklyn, multiple high-need communities did not receive seats; across Crown Heights, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville, East New York, and Bushwick, only one public school and one charter school were awarded new seats

It is imperative to have clarity on how the seat delegation was decided. We support greater transparency and stakeholder engagement in the decision-making around seat distribution, and urge city leaders to ensure seats exist in all communities who need them.

### **Concept Paper Analysis and Recommendations**

The DYCD COMPASS and SONYC Afterschool Concept Paper is an important starting point for renewing the afterschool system across New York. CCC is appreciative of the opportunity to provide feedback to DYCD and to the Council.

We are grateful to have received the Concept Paper, but are concerned that if the following areas are not addressed, the RFP process may lead to sector-wide issues or create new disparities. We urge the city and DYCD to consider these concerns to create a healthy afterschool system that supports young people and their families across New York City.

#### ***Clarity on Rates and Summer Programming***

##### **DYCD must provide rate transparency and a clear plan for summer for middle schoolers.**

The Concept Paper does not provide clarity around summer programming for SONYC. It provides minimal information regarding whether Summer Rising (currently jointly funded by DYCD and New York City Public Schools (NYCPS)) is the main model that will be required, or whether providers will have ownership over summer programming. DYCD must provide more clarity on the plan for summer and include the summer rate so providers may plan for full year programming accordingly. Currently, providers cannot plan effectively for or fully staff Middle School COMPASS programs year-round without rate transparency for school year *plus* summer.

**DYCD must enhance rates for school- and center-based school-aged programs and clarify summer requirements.** The proposed year-round rates do not account for inflation and COLAs over the grant period. Furthermore, the rate is insufficient for full-year elementary-school aged programming when including all described program elements and with DOH SACC staff child ratios, especially for younger children. (For more please see below sections on Staffing, Mental Health, Subcontractors.) Experts are citing \$10,728 for year-round COMPASS Elementary, \$7,682 for year-round SONYC.



## *Staffing Challenges*

**We urge DYCD to revisit staffing structures outlined in the Concept Paper.** The staffing structures outlined in the Concept Paper place undue onus on providers and pose significant challenges. Requiring staff to provide additional mental health crisis intervention, SEL, and college/career preparation components without having higher rates for programs is a significant challenge for providers.

**To that end, we urge you to address specific concerns related to staffing:**

- **The Content Specialist role** adds more years of supervisory experience that may create barriers to hiring staff who typically may have fewer than 1-2 years' of work experience. We are concerned that DYCD intends this position to provide additional site supervision and replace an Assistant Program Director position without appropriate compensation. In addition, reducing the previously-emphasized teaching credentials/experience and education background of the **Education Specialists (now called the Content Specialist)** will lessen the effectiveness of this position, especially concerning collaboration with the day school and maintaining academic and programmatic excellence while ensuring that enrichment activities work well with the school's scope and sequence. This is different from previous RFPs and DYCD's explicit guidance in the past.
- The concept paper notes that **Youth Worker roles** aged 16+ years old must have graduated high school or have one year of work experience. It is highly unlikely most 16- and 17-year-olds would have graduated high school unless they have their GEDs or are early graduates. Clarity is needed if DYCD wants only 18+ to be hired given this change.
- **The new mandate to identify at least one staff member who will cover the mental health and wellness support functions** may raise HIPAA and liability concerns for the non-profit sector and unfairly burden afterschool staff and their nonprofits. Without clear protocols or chains of command, there is risk for dealing with private information and critical crisis decision making across multiple entities, such as NYCPS staff, principals, school social workers, and non-profit staff. Typically, the Director is responsible for handling coordination of crisis management within the afterschool program and decisions involving collaboration of the school. To shift the role to be fulfilled by anyone on staff at any position or experience level will be confusing for providers and potentially place ill-equipped staff into roles of significant responsibility without the appropriate educational credentials or licensure required by NYC/NYS. While afterschool providers have strong bonds and relationships with the participants, they are not mental health professionals and instead are better positioned to offer referrals to available mental health resources.
- The new unfunded mandate that center-based programs have additional roles of a **janitor, a security staff, and a receptionist** places undue burdens on centers who may

lack adequate physical space for these new hires and do not have adequate funding to increase staffing without significant rate increases. Also, many NYCHA or city-owned sites where center-based sites are housed already have these roles covered by other funding sources. To avoid duplication, we suggest DYCD include a waiver for sites who already have these positions covered in other ways.

- Include a College and Career Readiness Coordinator to work with staff, schools, and students to infuse college options and career readiness into existing curricula.

### *Concern around the Mental Health Requirements*

**DYCD must provide greater clarity on mental health supports providers will be required to offer.** The current language in the concept paper does not provide adequate information on mental health training and services required, liability in an emergency, or protocol around decision-making related to mental health needs and crises, including if the afterschool Director, the NYCPS Principal, or another stakeholder or staff would be the decision maker in a crisis. It is unfair to assign such tasks to unlicensed and uncertified staff. The addition of this role raises numerous questions that need clarification within the complex New York State and City regulated context of providing mental health care for young people and their families in a diverse city like New York.

- **Reconsider new requirements around the role of afterschool staff in providing mental health services to ensure that qualified, experienced and appropriately licensed and credentialed staff are providing appropriate supports.** The Concept Paper requires providers to have on-site mental health supports in the case of a crisis, and requires providers to offer wellness and social-emotional group sessions on an ongoing basis. There are many issues with requiring untrained, uncertified, and unlicensed afterschool educators to make decisions around young children's mental health; only appropriately trained mental health professionals should make such decisions and provide services. Given the rise in mental health needs among children and youth, it is important to rely on professionals and not require afterschool staff to provide services they are not equipped to offer. DYCD should instead support afterschool staff in offering referrals to appropriate care, as well as provide concrete resources to enable sites to have qualified mental health professionals on site. If DYCD wants providers to be supportive in the referral process, they must provide explicit guidance on liaising with school staff given HIPPA protections and not disclosing IEPs.
- **Unless the Pay-Per-Participant rate is increased, DYCD must lower the requirements they have outlined for the mental health community partnerships.** DYCD must give providers a clear referral plan with a list of mental health providers that

are free and low cost. This cannot be made into an unfunded mandate for each afterschool provider to create this list or attempt to find hospitals or licensed mental health providers to provide this free of cost. Afterschool groups shouldering the mental health assessment and referrals of kids in crisis is not ideal, as it is not their primary role and they are not in a clinical setting. When requesting hospitals or mental health providers to sign off on community partnerships over the past three years, CBOs have been denied simply due to medical and licensed mental health providers' lack of capacity to accept new patients. Without additional funding added, this requirement will be difficult or impossible for providers to fulfill.

- **Invest in mental health services for young people in afterschool programs.** To have a robust mental health system for children and youth, there must be a deep investment to support the true cost of services, including licensed mental health providers and other professionals. A model that has proven successful is the community schools model, which allows funds to go to a consultant or subcontractor mental health partner. It also allows for a tiered intervention option for the mental health provider's response, so it is clearer how they are to support the afterschool program through staff training, support/engagement with families and/or crisis interventions. We urge the City to invest in additional mental health resources to help support students being served through afterschool programs.

### *Trainings and Alignment with NYC Public Schools*

- **Provide greater clarity on requirements related to Social Emotional Learning.**
  - For providers with multiple sites, will they need to coordinate different SEL frameworks and training if each school has a different model? Or is alignment with the DOE school site's SEL framework fully optional, despite DYCD referring to the required School Partnership agreement on page 16?
  - Are providers responsible for that cost in addition to the price of the model itself, or would afterschool providers be covered by the schools' expenses/training of staff in their chosen SEL as part of the School Partnership? There appears to be no money in the rate for these additional costs.
  - Providers should have authority over choosing the models that work best with the communities and youth they work with. Allowing this flexibility can ensure that culturally relevant and responsive models are chosen.

### *Outcomes, Tracking and Evaluation*

- **Revise evaluation of programs based on attendance and fully fund programs in order to meet enrollment targets.** Because the rates for afterschool are so low,

programs cannot fully hire, meaning they cannot fully enroll. If the City wants certain enrollment targets to be met, these programs must be fully funded.

- **Ensure students with disabilities are able to access programs by providing busing upon the completion of the afterschool program at 6pm, and by ensuring students receive the supports and services they need.** We urge cohesion between DYCD and NYCPS to ensure that transportation is secured and that any supports offered to students during the school day – such as paraprofessionals – transfer into the afterschool sessions as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these issues.

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<sup>i</sup> Afterschool Alliance. “Afterschool Programs: A Wise Public Investment.” <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/afterschool-and-community-programs/articles/afterschool-programs-wise-public-investment>

<sup>ii</sup> NYC Office of the Comptroller. “Afterschool for Some: Assessing the Adams Administration’s Flawed Rollout of the “Universal” Afterschool Expansion.” August 2025. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/afterschool-for-some/>



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CO\_LAB Theater Group

Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper  
Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair  
Thursday, September 18, 2025

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper. I am writing to advocate for the crucial role of arts education in afterschool programs.

My name is David E. Shane, and I am the Executive Director of CO\_LAB Theater Group. We provide creative and social outlet for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the city. Our weekly residencies reach nearly 250 individuals annually, including in our first NYC public school residency at PS811X in The Bronx. That number is expected to grow in the coming year as we expand partnerships with more D75 Public Schools.

Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development. By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people and help them develop 21st-century life skills.

The arts are particularly important for individuals with developmental disabilities - offering pathways for personal expression and building confidence. Theater is also all about collaboration, a skill that transfers directly to future social and employment opportunities.

New York City's existing arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource for enriching afterschool programs. I urge the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Shift the focus from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) to recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP:** DYCD's RFP for afterschool programs must explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components and recognize the costs associated with providing professional arts instruction. DYCD should also ensure that arts programming is delivered by qualified teaching artists and/or arts organizations to guarantee the highest quality of direct service while offering employment opportunities to NYC's cultural workforce.



- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage partnerships with local arts organizations and artists to fill Activity Specialist roles with highly-qualified Teaching Artists.
- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Arts is a proven medium for helping youth develop SEL skills, with clear documented research on the intersection of arts education and competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of these recommendations. Investing in arts education is an investment in our future, and a crucial component of a comprehensive afterschool expansion strategy.

Sincerely,  
David E. Shane



**Remarks to NYC City Council's  
Committee on Children & Youth**

Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair

Hearing: Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper

*September 18, 2025 (Expanded comments for written submission)*

Good afternoon. I'm Karen Jolicoeur, Executive Director of Creative Art Works, a 39-year-old youth development nonprofit working in the visual and multimedia arts. It's my pleasure to speak with you today about arts education and creative youth development as vital, necessary components of high-quality out-of-school-time programs.

We were delighted to learn about the forthcoming expansion of meaningful enrichment for NYC kids outside the school day. After all, study after study corroborates our own experience employing the arts as a catalyst for every one of the goals outlined in DYCD's Theory of Change: civic engagement, youth empowerment, pro-social behaviors and connection, literacy, family engagement, and employment access and skills development.

The heightened emphasis on partnerships with other community-based organizations outlined in the concept paper is prudent—even inspired. Nonprofits like ours—which can't qualify as MWBEs, by the way—bring not only greater capacity and additional financial resources, but also expertise—and **truly, quality matters**. Our professional teaching artists bring not only well-developed artistic practice to the table, but also receive ongoing professional development and guidance from our programs staff in curriculum development and lesson planning, positive and creative youth development, and social-emotional learning.

It's no surprise then, that this past academic year, 93% of our elementary and middle school students attested to being more excited to come to school on days when they had Creative Art Works in or after school. We know that quality arts experiences outside the school day are correlated with positive academic behaviors and—further—are a vehicle for every one of the six goals outlined on page seven of the concept paper. Our assets-based approach embeds and enhances creativity, collaboration, cross-cultural communication, critical thinking, and workforce skills.

Where the contemplated structure falls short, then, is in excluding the arts from the program requirements, and relegating these instead to the “extra, optional, if-you-can-squeeze-it-in-after-the-rest” section of the proposal. Why STEM and not STEAM? Can applicants not incorporate literacy-based arts integration to fulfill the literacy component? Could creative youth development programs with demonstrated impacts on social-emotional learning fulfill the SEL requirements?

New York City is one of the cultural centers of the world, and even so, access to meaningful creative education and experience remains a pronounced issue of equity and disparity. In furtherance of DYCD's own stated goals, we urge you to incorporate the arts as a required component of OST programs. Thank you.



**Testimony to City Council Committee on Children & Youth Oversight Hearing on  
Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**

*Submitted to the City Council Committee on Children & Youth on September 16, 2025*

*Prepared by Melinda Wang, Research and Advocacy Manager of Dance/NYC*

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Thank you for your consideration of this testimony, submitted on behalf of Dance/NYC ([Dance.NYC](https://www.dancenyc.org)), a service organization that reaches over 6,000 individual dance artists, 1,700 dance entities, and the many for-profit dance businesses based in the metropolitan New York City area. Our areas of service are of special benefit to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Color), immigrant, disabled, low-income, and small-budget dance workers. Through action-oriented research and advocacy, Dance/NYC seeks to represent and advance the interests of the dance field. We embed the values of justice, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of our operations and make the following requests through this lens.

New York City's arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource for enriching after school programs. As such, Dance/NYC urges the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Shift the focus from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) to recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP:** DYCD's RFP for afterschool programs must explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components and recognize the costs associated with providing professional arts instruction. DYCD should also ensure that arts programming is delivered by qualified teaching artists and/or arts organizations to guarantee the highest quality of direct service while offering employment opportunities to NYC's cultural workforce.
- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage partnerships with local arts organizations and artists to fill Activity Specialist roles with highly-qualified Teaching Artists.

- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Arts is a proven medium for helping youth develop SEL skills, with clear documented research on the intersection of arts education and competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status.

**Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development.** Its benefits extend beyond the arts classroom, improving engagement and success across all subjects. Research shows that low-income students who participate in the arts are five times less likely to drop out and more than twice as likely to graduate from college. They achieve better test scores and are more likely to participate in civic engagement opportunities, like volunteering, student government, and voting in their young adulthood.<sup>1</sup> In this way, arts education acts as a critical defense against larger disinvestment in low-income students and their families.

**Moreover, arts education fosters inclusion and belonging.** 86% of NYC schools said arts education was a driver of social and emotional learning.<sup>2</sup> Dance therapy, in particular, supports emotional, cognitive, and physical integration, and has proven especially beneficial for people with chronic conditions. According to the National Dance Education Organization, dance also provides immigrant and non-English speaking students with a non-verbal way to express themselves and maintain aspects of identity not always supported in a new culture or language. Similarly, dance creates meaningful opportunities for cognitive development and inclusion for disabled students.<sup>3</sup>

**For these reasons, we once again urge the City Council to integrate arts and dance education thoroughly into DYCD’s COMPASS concept paper.** By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can create inclusive and vibrant spaces for students to learn, engage civic skills, and express their unique perspectives. The arts are vital to comprehensive afterschool expansion if we want to ensure a well-rounded education. We hope to continue working with the City Council to invest in arts education for every student.

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<sup>1</sup> Americans for the Arts. [Arts Education Navigator: Facts and Figures](#).

<sup>2</sup> NYC Public Schools Arts in Schools Report 2023-2024.

<sup>3</sup> National Dance Education Organization. [Evidence: A Report on the Impact of Dance in the K-12 Setting](#) (2013).



**Testimonial Letter to the NYC City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**

**Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair**

**Thursday, September 18, 2025**

Chair Stevens and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of Dancewave, where I have the privilege of serving as Executive Director.

For thirty years, Dancewave has advanced positive youth development through a holistic approach to dance education that emphasizes both technical excellence and the life skills young people need to thrive. Our programs intentionally measure growth in creativity, social-emotional learning, and leadership, helping young people broaden their horizons, build lasting connections, and prepare for success in higher education, the workforce, and beyond. Today, Dancewave's reach extends across all five boroughs and into all 51 City Council districts, creating intergenerational bridges and strengthening communities citywide.

The arts are not extracurricular—they are essential. They open doors to inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking; deepen literacy; build career readiness; and provide young people with safe, inclusive spaces to discover their voice. By fully integrating the arts into afterschool programs, New York City has the opportunity to provide students with 21st-century life skills that will serve them in every area of their lives.

I have seen firsthand how transformative this can be. At Brooklyn International High School, a decades-long partner, Dancewave bridges in-school arts programming with preprofessional training after school, free of cost to families. One graduate, Amarah, recently secured a Brooklyn Arts Council grant and is now producing her first community dance project and film. Another, Jesús, is pursuing higher education at BMCC and exploring employment opportunities at Dancewave. Both are first-generation New Yorkers whose pathways were shaped by the mentorship, training, and community they found through arts education. Their stories demonstrate how investment in the arts yields lasting returns for individuals, families, and neighborhoods.

To build on this success, we urge the City Council to adopt the following recommendations:

1. Shift from STEM to STEAM: Formally recognize the Arts as integral to student development, ensuring STEAM—not STEM—frames afterschool expansion.
2. Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP: Mandate that DYCD explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components, fund them at a level that covers professional instruction, and ensure delivery by qualified teaching artists and arts organizations—bolstering both student outcomes and the



cultural workforce.

3. Encourage Partnerships with Arts Organizations: Require that a portion of program budgets be dedicated to engaging local arts nonprofits and artists, filling Activity Specialist roles with highly trained professionals who bring cultural relevance and deep expertise.
4. Recognize Arts as a Driver of Social and Emotional Learning: Ground afterschool expansion in the research showing that arts education fosters self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
5. Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives: Alongside MWBE inclusion, elevate nonprofits—many founded and led by people of color—that advance equity but are excluded from MWBE certification pathways.

Chair Stevens, Members of the Committee—investing in arts education is investing in New York City's future. It is not a supplement, but a cornerstone of a comprehensive afterschool strategy that will prepare the next generation of leaders, innovators, and engaged citizens.

Thank you for your attention and for your commitment to ensuring every child in New York City has access to high-quality arts education.

Nicole Touzien  
Executive Director





**Saskia Traill**

**President & CEO of ExpandedED Schools**

**Testimony Before the New York City Council Committee on Children and Youth**

**City Council Hearing on Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper: September 19, 2025**

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My name is Saskia Traill and I am the President & CEO of ExpandedED Schools. I would like to thank Speaker Adams, Chair Stevens, and the Committee on Children and Youth for the opportunity to testify today.

ExpandedED Schools applauds the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Mayor's Office for advancing city-funded afterschool. New York City's afterschool system is a national model. With the largest municipal investment in afterschool in the country, our city demonstrates how sustained public commitment can fuel innovation, support working families, and create safe, enrichment environments where young people can develop the skills they need to thrive. This investment not only strengthens communities but also contributes to New York City's role as an economic engine for the nation.

While ExpandedED Schools has always supported the City's efforts to provide high quality afterschool programs, in some key ways the concept paper falls short of the bold steps needed to address fundamental shortcomings of the existing system.

**Funding must align with real costs.** The proposed rates—\$6,800 for elementary programs and \$3,900 for middle school Schools Out of New York City (SONYC) programs—do not reflect the true cost of high-quality afterschool services. Requirements for extensive operation hours, evidence-based curricula, mental health support, and compliance with staffing and partnership mandates contribute to rising costs. Without an increase in the per-participant rate, providers will struggle to pay competitive wages and deliver essential support for our young people and families.

**College and career readiness must be embedded.** ExpandedED supports explicit, required college and career readiness activities. **The Exploring Futures program is a valuable addition,** and college and career readiness should be embedded across all grade levels. ExpandedED strongly supports efforts to enhance these opportunities within COMPASS elementary programs and School's Out New York City (SONYC) programs.

**Capacity-building needs greater investment.** Programs lack staff time and resources to strengthen skills, cultivate partnerships and coordinate enrichment activities. We recommend that DYCD and the City:

- **Invest at least \$5 million in additional support** needed to strengthen the field in SEL, mental health, career-connected learning, STEM, and literacy.
- **Dedicate funds for professional development,** and partnerships with external experts.
- **Provide** convenings of DYCD-funded and privately funded professional development providers to build a stronger community of practice, especially in the first year of the new contract cycle.

As one of the leading afterschool intermediaries in NYC, ExpandedED is dedicated to improving systems that lead to long-term outcomes for students and families in NYC Public Schools. We have proudly partnered with DYCD since the start of the city's afterschool program. More recently, ExpandedED

partnered for more than four years to conduct a rigorous analysis of social-emotional learning (SEL) activities already in use across the field, ensuring proper alignment across the various frameworks that DYCD has established and the expected outcomes for young people. We recommend that DYCD:

- **Share information about those reports through briefings** to the field on the substantive work that informed the recent concept paper and measurement expectations. This would strengthen engagement with the field and foster a sense of partnership between providers and DYCD as we advance SEL together.
- **Include staff surveys on SEL practices**, alongside measures of youth outcomes, to create a more holistic understanding of DYCD's program impact.

ExpandedED Schools recognizes the value of DYCD-vetted curricula in raising program quality. We anticipate a surge of SEL providers wanting to be included on the vetted list. To ensure fairness, innovation and buy-in from the field, we recommend:

- **Creation of an external working group** to collaborate with DYCD staff in developing criteria and vetting curricula annually.
- Clearly state this intention in the forthcoming RFP to enhance transparency and confidence in the process.

Additionally, ExpandedED supports the new partnership expectations, which will enhance connections among youth-serving nonprofits and allow DYCD-funded programs to serve as anchors for additional services that young people deserve. However, we recommend:

- **Clarifying in the RFP that Minority/Women-Owned Business enterprises (M/WBE) requirements will apply only to for-profit partnership or subcontracting expenses**, as nonprofits cannot become M/WBE-certified.

**Lastly, ExpandedED strongly urges DYCD and the City to ensure year-round programming for middle school students.** The current lack of Summer programming for SONYC is detrimental to young people during a critical stage of brain development and their transition from elementary to middle school. Summer programming supports students, working families, and community safety.

Thank you again to Speaker Adams, Chair Stevens, and the rest of the committee for holding this hearing and for all the work that you do for children and families across the City. We at ExpandedED look forward to continuing to be a partner to you when it comes to being of service to young people and their communities.

Sincerely,

Saskia Traill

Email: [strail@expandedschools.org](mailto:strail@expandedschools.org)

Phone: 212.677.7941

Jennifer DiFiglia, Founder of FUTURECREATIVE

Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper

Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair  
Thursday, September 18, 2025

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper. I am writing to advocate for the crucial role of arts education in afterschool programs.

My name is Jennifer DiFiglia, and I am the founder of FUTURECREATIVE. We empower youth through transformative arts experiences, connecting them with professional creatives and inspiring their potential to shape the world.

New York City's creative economy is a signature jobs engine and wage driver. As of 2022, creative industries employed roughly **274,000 New Yorkers**, accounting for just over **6% of city employment and 8% of wage & salary earnings**. Average earnings in these industries reached **\$146,000**, outpacing the citywide average. Pre-pandemic analysis put the sector's total economic activity around **\$110 billion**. After-school programs include authentic arts learning, they build the pipeline into one of NYC's highest-value sectors.

At the same time, access to arts learning is uneven, and cost is a major barrier for low-income families. The end of federal pandemic relief has intensified a funding cliff for enrichment; families who can't pay are the first to lose access. In-school staffing losses in recent years have reduced arts capacity, which makes after-school provision even more important for equity.

At the same time, access to arts learning is uneven, and cost is a major barrier for low-income families. The end of federal pandemic relief has intensified a funding cliff for enrichment; families who can't pay are the first to lose access. In-school staffing losses in recent years have reduced arts capacity, which makes after-school provision even more important for equity.

The research is clear: expanding arts education improves the very outcomes the City tracks—attendance, engagement, social-emotional skills, and school climate. A large randomized study found meaningful reductions in disciplinary infractions, higher engagement, and gains in writing after schools increased arts opportunities. Global health reviews similarly link arts participation with better mental health, reduced loneliness, and stronger social cohesion. Arts learning also systematically builds the "4 Cs"—critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity—skills employers consistently demand.

Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development. By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people and help them develop 21st-century life skills.

New York City's existing arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource for enriching afterschool programs. I urge the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Shift the focus from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) to recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP:** DYCD's RFP for afterschool programs must explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components and recognize the costs associated with providing professional arts instruction. DYCD should also ensure that arts programming is delivered by qualified teaching artists and/or arts organizations to guarantee the highest quality of direct service while offering employment opportunities to NYC's cultural workforce.
- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage partnerships with local arts organizations and artists to fill Activity Specialist roles with highly-qualified Teaching Artists.
- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Arts is a proven medium for helping youth develop SEL skills, with clear documented research on the intersection of arts education and competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status.

New York’s identity—and a substantial share of its economy—rests on creativity. Requiring arts in after-school is not “one more thing”; it is workforce preparation, mental-health support, and opportunity-making for young people who would otherwise be left out. Thank you for your leadership and for ensuring every child in every neighborhood has access to high-quality arts learning after school.

Respectfully,

*Jennifer DiFiglia*

*Founder, Futurecreative*

• [jennifer@futurecreative.art](mailto:jennifer@futurecreative.art)

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### **Sources (selected)**

- NYC Comptroller, Spotlight: New York City’s Creative Economy (Oct. 16, 2024) — ~274,000 jobs (2022), avg. earnings \$146K; just over 6% of employment and 8% of wage & salary earnings.
- NYC Comptroller, The Creative Economy (2019) — ~\$110B in total economic activity; ~293,000 jobs (pre-COVID baseline).
- Afterschool Alliance, America After 3PM (2020) — 61% of low-income parents cite program cost as a barrier; pp. 28–29.
- U.S. Department of Education, ARP ESSER Deadlines (June 12, 2024) — obligation deadline Sept. 30, 2024 (with limited liquidation extensions).
- NYC Arts in Education Roundtable testimony (Feb. 1, 2024) — loss of 425 certified arts teachers (2020–2023).
- Kisida & Bowen, Education Next (2023) — RCT results on arts access: –20.7% disciplinary infractions, +engagement, +writing.
- WHO Health Evidence Network Report 67 (2019) — synthesis of 3,000+ studies on arts and health across the lifespan.



**Harlem Junior Tennis and Education Program Testimony  
Committee on Children and Youth  
Oversight Hearing on Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper.  
Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 1:00 pm**

Thank you, Chair Stevens and members of the Council Committee of Children and Youth, for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper. My name is Katrina Adams, President and Chief Executive Officer of the [Harlem Junior Tennis and Education Program \(HJTEP\)](#). I am testifying today as an after-school provider that has served the vibrant community of Harlem and beyond for over 50 years.

HJTEP serves New York City youth ages five to 18, helping them develop essential life skills, providing academic enrichment, and creating pathways for our student-athletes to earn college scholarships. We use tennis as a vessel to provide educational and athletic support and promote physical and mental wellness for diverse inner-city youth. On court, HJTEP operates youth tennis programs helping to close the 'play equity gap.' Off court, the HJTEP Learning Resource Center offers holistic academic and wellness support to youth through a diagnostic academic assessment of each child, along with tutoring, mentorship, ACT/SAT testing and college counseling, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) training, nutritional, fitness, mindfulness, and mental health counseling.

During the school year, we serve 800+/- students through after-school programs, and in-school tennis instruction as gym/PE programming. During the summer months we enroll 150-300 students in our beginners and tournament training summer camps. The majority (85%) of our student-athletes are from BIPOC (64% African American, 13% Hispanic, 8% Asian) and low-income populations. Once each child is registered for our after-school and/or summer camp tennis program, all services and values provided by the LRC are completely FREE-OF-CHARGE to their families. The average actual cost to HJTEP to provide the scope of our services per individual child is \$10,782. This figure excludes expenditures that do not directly support students (i.e, fundraising, marketing, etc.). Though most families do not pay full cost as we provide scholarships to families in support of their child and/or multiple children's re-enrollment to persist in our program.

Our success is measured by our students' performance on court, in the classroom, and in life, fostering confidence, executive functioning skills, and character to become community leaders. HJTEP's lasting impact is reflected in the exemplary lives our students go on to lead. Many of our participants become the first in their families to attend college, some become competitive national tennis tournament players and champions through college and beyond. We are proud that our alumni go on to attend top institutions like MIT, Stanford, Georgetown, Spelman, Loyola, and Howard. One of our 2022 graduates is currently attending college in Rome on a 4-year tennis scholarship. And perhaps most notably, James Blake, former world-ranked tennis professional and philanthropist, is an HJTEP alum. Freshman Assemblymember of the 70th District, Jordan Wright is also an alum of HJTEP.

HJTEP is more than a program—we are a multi-generational hub for youth and families across Harlem. Students describe it as "a home away from home," a place where they are known, encouraged, and challenged to flourish with their unique gifts. Our holistic approach has proven to be transformative. These transformations are especially visible in how our alumni continue to return to HJTEP as parents, tennis coaches, tutors, board members, and local elected leaders in our Harlem district. We are proud that they desire to stay connected to our organization and pay it forward to the next generations in the same ways they felt their futures were shaped by the leaders of their time.



With this background and expertise, HJTEP joins in urging the City Council to consider the following recommendations for universal afterschool expansion and for DYCD's RFP:

- 1) **Recognize the Importance of Sports-Based Education Programs:** Sports are a proven vessel for improving the [physical health](#) and development of youth. Athletics are also [linked](#) to greater academic performance, higher GPAs, and a higher likelihood of attending higher education. HJTEP's youth progressively matriculate grade levels from their initial entry into our program. Our high school students maintain a minimum GPA of 3.1; 25% generally earn tennis scholarships to matriculate to college; and 65% of our graduates receive non-athletic scholarships and financial aid. 95% of all HJTEP high school seniors have graduated since HJTEP's inception in 1972 - 100% in each of the last 20 years. To provide perspective, the high school graduation rate within our Central Harlem community averages 67%.
- 2) **Clarify Physical Activity Requirement to Specify Diverse Forms of Sports-Based Learning:** The concept paper's physical activity component should specifically detail the variety of sports and team sports activities available. This would empower organizations to develop and implement high-quality programs and encourage greater access to nontraditional sports like tennis. Tennis is a sport that instills discipline and resilience in young people. Further, research shows early exposure to competitive tennis improves cross-competence skills beyond the court such as independent agency, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), mindfulness, and internal focus.
- 3) **Encourage Partnership with Sports-Based Education Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage more partnerships with local sports-based education organizations.
- 4) **Highlight After-School Programs as Essential for Youth's Long-Term Growth:** Afterschool enriches the lives of youth, building critical life skills and providing pathways to higher education and scholarship opportunities. HJTEP knows our programs enrich the lives of our students exponentially, as most stay with us for an average of between [5-10 years](#). Many neighborhood families know of our services and the positive impact our programs have on the lives of Harlem's youth, which keeps our afterschool registration wait list averaging 500 youth each year.
- 5) **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status. HJTEP's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and community empowerment are not just guiding words—they are lived realities embedded across every level of our organization and strategy. 100% of staff are BIPOC citizens who inherently mirror and reflect potential to our students, most are women. Many of our staff are also Harlem residents and HJTEP alumni - they intimately understand the social, psychological, and community stressors that our student-athletes traverse each day. This intentional and self-sustaining leadership pipeline ensures that our work remains grounded in the lived experiences of the youth and families we support. We prioritize hiring from within our community with a very stable staff retention rate. We invest in professional development to elevate the capacity and career growth of HJTEP staff, for example, in 2023, our entire staff completed a professional mental health training series, equipping them to better serve the social-emotional needs of our youth—many of whom face compounding effects of poverty, trauma, and systemic exclusion.

*Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper*

Committee on Children and Youth - Althea V. Stevens, Chairperson

Thursday, September 18, 2025 - Council Chambers - City Hall

**TESTIMONY PROVIDED BY NORTHSIDE CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Chairperson Stevens and esteemed members of the Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper.

My name is Paula Magnus, and I serve as Deputy Director of Northside Center for Child Development. Northside is a 79-year-old behavioral health clinic and community-based organization providing a broad range of services, including afterschool programming. We serve over 5,000 children and families annually across the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Harlem.

At Northside, we have experienced firsthand DYCD's commitment to quality through their oversight of our After School and Summer Day Camp programs. Our program annually serves 64 children, ages five to twelve, including many with special needs. The performance data collected by DYCD helps us measure and demonstrate the positive impact on child development and family stability.

Research consistently supports Children who participate show improved academic outcomes, lower rates of substance use and early sexual activity, and a reduced likelihood of dropping out of school.

The structure and vision outlined are encouraging. Its focus on academic, physical, and social development aligns with Northside's integrated approach, which includes mental health programming to support the most vulnerable children and families.

Given the urgent shortfall in afterschool services, we believe the city is well-positioned to expand and enhance program quality. We respectfully urge the Council to review current programs and identify practical, cost-sensitive improvements that align with available resources.

Increasing the City's investment is essential—not only to mitigate the loss of federal funding, but to continue supporting working families and strengthening the city's network of nonprofit social service providers. These community-

**based organizations are on the front lines, delivering important services that keep children safe, supported, and thriving.**

**The updated program design is positive. However, key concerns remain, including:**

- Ensuring full cost coverage of services;**
- Annual rate adjustments in line with cost-of-living increases;**
- Allocating funds for a two-month start-up or adjustment period; and**
- Clarifying expectations around curriculum and program structure.**

**We urge the Council and DYCD to actively engage current providers in shaping future RFPs. Their insights can help inform more sustainable and effective afterschool programming.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Northside Center and the at-risk children and families we proudly serve.**

**Committee on Children and Youth**

**Testimony Given by:**

**Kimaada Le Gendre, Director of Education & Community Engagement, Queens Museum**  
**September 18, 2025**

Good morning, Chair Stevens and members of the Committee on Children and Youth. Thank you for hosting this important hearing and for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Kimaada Le Gendre, and I serve as Director of Education & Community Engagement at the Queens Museum. I am here in support of the planned expansion of COMPASS and SONYC afterschool programs, and I urge DYCD to prioritize funding for arts and cultural organizations in its forthcoming RFP.

The Queens Museum is dedicated to presenting the highest quality visual arts and educational programming for the New York metropolitan area, with a special commitment to the residents of Queens—one of the most diverse communities in the world. We fulfill this mission by designing exhibitions and education programs that foster appreciation of art, support artists, and enhance quality of life through creativity and cultural engagement.

Arts education is central to our work. Our programs serve participants of all ages and abilities:

- **School Programs** provide hands-on learning experiences for PreK–12 students citywide.
- **Queens Teens Institute for Art and Social Justice** empowers high school students to connect art and activism.
- **ArtAccess** ensures individuals with disabilities have meaningful opportunities for expression.
- **Creative Aging** engages older adults in lifelong learning through the arts.
- **New New Yorkers** offers free multilingual classes for immigrant communities.
- **Family Programs and seasonal camps** foster creativity, cultural exchange, and intergenerational learning.

As Director of Education & Community Engagement, I oversee these initiatives. Looking ahead, we are preparing to break ground this winter on the final phase of our capital project, with completion anticipated in 2027. This phase will include the creation of the **Suna Children's Museum at the Queens Museum**—the first dedicated arts and culture museum for children in Queens.

The Children's Museum will transform 15,000 square feet of space into an intergenerational, multilingual hub for learning and creativity. Its four core zones will include:

- **Make:** A cutting-edge makerspace with 3D printers and design tools, linking art, design, and the Panorama of the City of New York.
- **Play:** A performance and visual arts space for storytelling, imaginative play, and creative exploration.
- **Interact:** A technology-driven lab blending traditional crafts with innovation, fostering problem-solving and critical thinking.
- **Grow:** An indoor/outdoor sustainability zone, including a learning garden in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, with programs on climate change, food justice, and community-centered environmental practices.

Queens Museum  
New York City Building  
Flushing I  
Queens, I

With this expansion, we will broaden our afterschool offerings to serve even more students across all five boroughs. Investment in arts education and enrichment through COMPASS and SONYC is an investment in the city's future—cultivating creativity, confidence, and community among our young people.

For these reasons, I join my colleagues in strongly urging DYCD to prioritize arts and cultural organizations when issuing its RFP later this fall. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.



Extraordinary reach.  
Unconditional care.  
Life-changing results.

**Testimony to the New York City Council  
Committee on Children and Youth  
Hearing on Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**

**SCO Family of Services  
Anansa Bagot, Vice President, Education and Community Services  
September 18, 2025**

Thank you, Chair Stevens and the NYC Council, for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding the City's recently announced expansion of afterschool programming and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) concept paper and upcoming RFP.

SCO Family of Services is a human services agency that has proudly served New York's children and families for over 130 years. We help 45,000 New Yorkers each year build a strong foundation for the future through a comprehensive continuum of services that focus on Education and Community Services, Family Permanency, Health and Wellness, Youth Justice, Housing, and Services for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

We commend the City's commitment to expanding afterschool programming and appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) vision and upcoming RFP.

For the past 15 years, SCO has been a trusted provider of COMPASS, SONYC, and Beacon afterschool programs, delivering high-quality, community-rooted services that support youth development, academic success, and family stability. SCO is deeply invested in this work and brings a unique, holistic approach to youth services, integrating STEM, social emotional learning, career exploration, family engagement, and community partnerships to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive.

As NYC prepares to release the RFP, we urge DYCD to consider the following:

**Rate Adjustments to Reflect True Costs**

Contracts must cover the true cost of staffing and operating programs. It has been over a decade since DYCD released a new RFP for afterschool services. During this time, providers have operated under outdated rates through contract extensions despite rising costs. The new RFP must include updated rates that account for increased staffing costs, expanded service expectations, and annual cost of living adjustments.



**Subcontractors**

It is expected that community-based organizations (CBOs) to allocate a minimum of 10% of their annual budget to work with subcontractors. While we strongly support collaboration with specialized partners, the proposed funding levels are insufficient to support this requirement. Without additional funding, CBOs will struggle to maintain meaningful subcontractor relationships over an extended period. We urge DYCD to increase overall funding to ensure subcontractor partnerships are viable and impactful.

**Youth Worker Qualifications**

The proposed qualifications for youth workers appear to be unrealistic. The position requires candidates to be 16 years old, have a high school diploma or GED, and have at least one year of experience working with children under 13. At 16, most candidates are still in high school and unlikely to meet these criteria. We recommend revising the qualifications.

**Mental Health Worker Requirements**

The concept paper lacks clarity around the qualifications and training for mental health staff. Given the increasing mental health needs of children in our community, it is essential that the RFP clearly define the credentialing requirements and include appropriate funding to hire skilled practitioners.

We are grateful to the NYC Council for convening a hearing on this important matter and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. We look forward to working together to continue to strengthen New York's families. Thank you for your consideration.



**FY 2026**  
**Committee on Children and Youth**  
**Oversight: *Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper***  
**Council Member Althea Stevens, Chair**

**Written Testimony submitted by**  
**Debra Sue Lorenzen, Director of Youth and Education**  
**September 18, 2025**

Thank you, Chair Stevens and members of the New York City Council Committee on Youth for convening today's hearing. My name is Debra Sue Lorenzen. I am the Director of Youth and Education for St. Nicks Alliance in North Brooklyn.

I want to begin by thanking the City Council and Chair Stevens for your deep commitment to the children and youth of New York City. The most important investment today's grown ups can make in New York City's future is in our youngest residents. At St. Nicks Alliance and our affiliate School Settlement Association, COMPASS funds 11 COMPASS afterschool centers serving more than 1,150 K-8th graders and 10 Summer Rising or center-based camps serving over 1,400.

COMPASS and other DYCD-funded initiatives are critical to St. Nicks Alliance's greater network of comprehensive youth and education services for more than 10,000 of North Brooklyn's 2-24 years old and their families. Our services include an early childhood center, 24 afterschool centers, 7 community schools and community centers, and comprehensive teen programs. Through these initiatives, we work in partnership with dozens of schools and thousands of families to help children develop the academic, healthy living and social-emotional skills to thrive.

St. Nicks Alliance, alongside our fellow providers, has long-awaited the upcoming Request for Proposal as the needs of children and the funds required to meet them have changed dramatically since the last procurement was issued. DYCD's recent Concept Paper is a critical step in developing a responsive and reasonable RFP, that will support responsive and high-quality programs for our children that will lead to positive short and long-term outcomes.

The COMPASS Concept Paper has hit the mark on many vital components, such as the continued integration of academic and socio-emotional supports, and the expansion of elementary access. However, the COMPASS Concept Paper is also woefully disconnected from the realities of operating afterschool centers in 2025 and fails to adequately project into the future—which at the minimum is six years. These shortcomings must be corrected before the release of an RFP.

## Funding Structure

The increased rates in the concept paper acknowledge this concern, but the proposed price per participant (PPP) rates are still inadequate to properly fund 12-month contracts or the additional requirements laid out in the concept paper. Standard cost of living adjustments (COLAs) and cost escalators should be used to ensure contracts are sustainable and responsive to the current economic reality. In addition, the much higher operating and staffing costs for center-based afterschool programs are not acknowledged or addressed in this Concept Paper.

Requiring a minimum of 10% of every program budget to go towards subcontractors is simply unrealistic and further strains the low proposed price per participant rates. Further, this requirement is punitive toward organizations such as St. Nicks Alliance who have spent years building and training exceptional rosters of teaching artists and other activity specialists. Given that an hour of instruction by a subcontractor averages \$350 compared to \$50 by an on-staff specialist, our practice is far more cost-effective and a far better use of public funds than the Concept Paper proposes.

### Recommendations:

- Increase the proposed Price Per Participant<sup>1</sup>.
  - Increase the base COMPASS Elementary PPP to \$10,728 per participant for a 12-month contract for school year and summer programming.
  - Increase the SONYC PPP to \$5,500 per participant for school-year contracts, and \$7,682 per participant for 12-month contracts.
  - Fund center-based contracts at a higher PPP rate to account for the additional required staff positions and facilities maintenance.
- Include a COLA tied to the consumer price index in years two through six, and include a built-in annual inflator for OTPS as costs for food, transportation, insurance and other supplies continue to rise.<sup>2</sup>
- Change the subcontractor requirement to list a maximum of the total program budget to be used instead of a minimum amount.

## **Staffing Structure**

While we agree that it is important to have qualified staff working in afterschool programs, the ongoing nonprofit staffing crisis requires flexibility and support from the City to ensure that staffing requirements are achievable and do not undermine program stability. Within the context of a years-long staffing crisis in the nonprofit sector, the inflated qualifications for Group Leaders and Youth Workers do not take into account either the need to foster a pipeline of youth development workers, or the competition these positions face with other minimum wage jobs. Additionally, the proposed qualifications and role of the Content Specialist mirrors those of the Program Director, which is not practical or necessary, while the Assistant Director role is

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed explanation of the assumptions and costs used to calculate these rates, please see the narrative and model budgets in UNH's report, [Assessing the True Cost of Implementing High-Quality Afterschool Programming in New York City](#).

<sup>2</sup> Examples of model budgets with 3% annual COLAs and cost escalators can be found in the above referenced report.

omitted. Providers will not have mental health professionals staffing afterschool programs, it is important to clarify the responsibilities and requirements of staff members fulfilling the mental health components laid out in this model.

The contrast in expectations for school-based and center-based programs is particularly stark in the staffing requirements. While the three additional positions (Janitor, Security, and Front Desk Reception) required for center-based programs reflect the additional demands of running afterschool out of a non-school site, the concept paper does not include funding to cover these staff. Requiring three additional staff positions to be funded out of the same price per participant rate is unrealistic and will aggravate the inequities between center-based and school-based programs.

#### Recommendations:

- Make the education qualifications for the Content Specialist more flexible, with the supervisory experience optional.
- Allow Group Leader and Youth Worker positions to be entry-level positions, reflecting how these roles are used in current afterschool programs.
  - Remove the experience requirement for Group Leaders
  - Remove educational requirements of Youth Workers.
- Clarify the requirements for who is eligible to fulfill the mental health requirements laid out in the concept paper.
- Fund center-based contracts at a higher rate to account for the three additional required staff positions.

### **Mental Health Component**

DYCD's recognition that afterschool providers are often faced with mental or behavioral health needs does, in fact, reflect our work on the ground. However, assessing mental health needs and accessing mental health supports are complex and must be done with care and qualified staff. The upcoming Request for Proposals must be realistic about our role and responsibilities of mental health supports, and take into account the proposed qualifications and pricing structure laid out in other parts of the concept paper. DYCD must also be mindful that a shortage of mental health and behavioral specialists exists in NYC, and attracting qualified therapists and case managers to the broad network of DYCD service providers is simply unrealistic—even if funding were present. Further, mental health and case workers need appropriate task and clinical supervision by highly qualified individuals, which many organizations can not provide.

#### Recommendations:

- **Share a citywide referral list of youth mental health support providers.**
- **Limit contractors' responsibilities for mental health support to referrals, with options to provide further support based on the capacity of the provider.**
- **Clarify if a referral to the school site's School Counselor or School Social Worker is sufficient to meet the requirements of the contract.**

- **Collaborate with other city agencies and partners to provide more in-depth professional development opportunities to contractors on the topic of mental health support.**
- **Establish an option for COMPASS grantees to apply, through a separate process, for dedicated funding for organizations with the existing infrastructure to support mental and behavioral health services.**

### **Summer programming**

We commend DYCD for making the COMPASS Elementary model a 12-month model. This will help improve staff hiring and retention, which will bring more stability and experience to programs across the City. In contrast, without year-round funding for SONYC contracts, the Concept Paper greatly undermines consistency for participants, schools and contractor staff.

In addition, the sections describing summer programming are vague in how contractors should expect the summer months to be structured. With the hours of operation being listed as 8AM to 6PM, it seems there may be an opportunity to envision new models for summer programming. While DYCD and NYCPs seem to stand strongly behind the Summer Rising model, and some children may benefit, youth, parents and staff are reporting frustration with the current model. They should have a voice in deciding what kind of programming is right for them and the City should also offer traditional summer camp.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Maintain currently proposed language to make COMPASS Elementary contracts 12-month contracts.**
- **Expand the SONYC model to allow for 12-month contracts for sites providing summer programming.**
- **Allow for a variety of summer programming models in both COMPASS Elementary and SONYC contracts to suit the needs of different populations of students. There should be further clarity in the upcoming RFP about the different summer programming options available to contractors.**

### **Other Concerns**

In addition to the above, the concept paper does not lay out how DYCD will choose new afterschool sites. In a recently released report, [\*Mapping the Gap: Expanding Afterschool Access in New York City\*](#), UNH mapped the current landscape of afterschool programming in New York City, and was able to assess the level of current afterschool access by Neighborhood Tabulation Area (NTA). We hope the 5,000 new slots added with the upcoming RFP and the 10,000 new slots to be added in FY28 will be placed with the same consideration, aiming to offer access to more neighborhoods and families.

Please see the full report (linked above) for an assessment of afterschool access by neighborhood, but below is a summary of UNH main findings:

- NYC is much closer to achieving universal access for middle school programming than for elementary school programming.
- The majority of NYC neighborhoods have limited access to afterschool for elementary-aged children, with 22 NTAs that contain an elementary school having no publicly-funded afterschool program.
- Despite displaying high economic hardship, many NTAs in the Bronx have limited access to elementary and/or middle school afterschool programs, showing a need for further investments in this borough.

I urge the City Council to work with DYCD to carefully consider and implement the feedback offered through DYCD surveys, United Neighborhood Houses Concept Paper Response, and this City Council hearing to make these critical changes, without which NYC is not setting up youth services providers or children to succeed.

Thank you for your kind consideration of St. Nicks Alliance's testimony.



# Campaign for Children

## City Council Oversight Hearing – Afterschool Expansion and Department of Youth and Community Development’s COMPASS and SONYC Concept Paper

September 18th, 2025

Thank you, Chair Stevens, and members of the Committee on Children and Youth, for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Department of Youth and Community Development’s COMPASS and SONYC Concept Paper.

The Campaign for Children (C4C) was formed in 2011 as early care and education and youth service providers, parents, and advocates joined forces to combat proposed reductions in these systems that would have decimated capacity and caused great harm. C4C benefits from the membership of more than 150 organizations, including advocates, civic leaders, early care and education, and afterschool and summer camp providers.

C4C commends DYCD for engaging stakeholders in the COMPASS/SONYC Concept Paper review process and encouraging the public to submit comments on the Concept Paper in July. Some important program elements were included in the Concept Paper. However, the members of C4C believe the following key concerns must be addressed to ensure that children continue to receive the highest quality afterschool programming, working parents have a safe place for their children to spend afterschool hours, and afterschool educators are paid a living wage.

C4C submits the following recommendations and questions for the consideration of the Committee on Children and Youth.

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### **Rates and Summer Programming**

- **Provide rate transparency and a clear plan for summer for middle schoolers.** The Concept Paper does not provide clarity around summer programming for SONYC.<sup>1</sup> It provides minimal information regarding whether Summer Rising (currently jointly funded by DYCD and New York City Public Schools (NYCPS)) is the main model that will be required, or whether providers will have ownership over summer programming. DYCD must provide more clarity on the plan for summer and include the summer rate so providers may plan for full year programming accordingly. Currently, providers cannot

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<sup>1</sup> page 17, SONYC program section ii. a.

plan effectively for or fully staff Middle School COMPASS programs year round without rate transparency for school year *plus* summer.

- **Enhance rates for school- and center-based school-aged programs and clarify summer requirements.** The proposed year-round rates do not account for inflation and COLAs over the grant period. Furthermore, the rate is insufficient for full-year elementary-school aged programming when including all described program elements and with DOH SACC staff child ratios, especially for younger children. (For more please see below sections on Staffing, Mental Health, Subcontractors.) Experts are citing \$10,728 for year-round COMPASS Elementary, \$7,682 for year-round SONYC.<sup>2</sup>
- **Remaining questions (impacting budgets):**
  - Will the Summer Rising model be equitably provided for the Middle School/SONYC sites listed in the COMPASS concept's Attachment 01?
  - Will summer programming for Middle School SONYC sites be contracted and funded by NYCPS or DYCD? Or continue as a jointly funded Summer Rising model? Will *all* Middle School SONYC sites include a summer program option or just some? If only some, what percentage will be offered as summer programming? What price per participant will be offered for summer Middle School slots?
  - For COMPASS school-aged sites, will providers have a choice of Summer Rising, or another program model option such as traditional pre-pandemic summer camp models?
  - During the summer, must COMPASS school-aged center- and school-based sites comply with DOH SACC ratios? Or will school-aged sites be governed in summer by different Summer Rising (NYCPS) requirements?

### **Staffing**

- **Revisit staffing structures outlined in the Concept Paper.** The staffing structures outlined in the Concept Paper place undue onus on providers and pose significant challenges. Requiring staff to provide additional mental health crisis intervention, SEL, and college/career preparation components without having higher rates for programs is a significant challenge for providers.

**To that end, we urge you to address specific concerns related to staffing:**

- **The Content Specialist role** adds more years of supervisory experience that may create barriers to hiring staff who typically may have fewer than 1-2 years' of work experience. We are concerned that DYCD intends this position to provide additional site supervision and replace an Assistant Program Director position without appropriate compensation. In addition, reducing the

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<sup>2</sup> UNH. The True Cost of Afterschool (2023).

<https://uploads.prod01.oregon.platform-os.com/instances/542/assets/True%20Cost%20of%20Afterschool%20November%202023.pdf?updated=1700510432>

previously-emphasized teaching credentials/experience and education background of the **Education Specialists (now called the Content Specialist)** will lessen the effectiveness of this position, especially concerning collaboration with the day school and maintaining academic and programmatic excellence while ensuring that enrichment activities work well with the school's scope and sequence. This is different from previous RFPs and DYCD's explicit guidance in the past.<sup>3</sup>

- The concept paper notes that **Youth Worker roles** aged 16+ years old must have graduated high school or have one year of work experience. It is highly unlikely most 16 and 17 year olds would have graduated high school unless they have their GEDs or are early graduates. Clarity is needed if DYCD wants only 18+ to be hired given this change.
- **The new mandate to identify at least one staff member who will cover the mental health and wellness support functions** may raise HIPAA and liability concerns for the non-profit sector and unfairly burden afterschool staff and their nonprofits. Without clear protocols or chains of command, there is risk for dealing with private information and critical crisis decisionmaking across multiple entities, such as NYCPS staff, principals, school social workers, and non-profit staff. Typically, the Director is responsible for handling coordination of crisis management within the afterschool program and decisions involving collaboration of the school. To shift the role to be fulfilled by anyone on staff at any position or experience level will be confusing for providers and potentially place ill-equipped staff into roles of significant responsibility without the appropriate educational credentials or licensure required by NYC/NYS. While afterschool providers have strong bonds and relationships with the participants, they are not mental health professionals and instead are better positioned to offer referrals to available mental health resources.
- The new unfunded mandate that center-based programs have additional roles of a **janitor, a security staff, and a receptionist** places undue burdens on centers who may lack adequate physical space for these new hires and do not have adequate funding to increase staffing without significant rate increases. Also, many NYCHA or city-owned sites where center-based sites are housed already have these roles covered by other funding sources. To avoid duplication, we suggest DYCD include a waiver for sites who already have these positions covered in other ways.
- **Include a College and Career Readiness Coordinator** to work with staff, schools, and students to infuse college options and career readiness into existing curricula.

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<sup>3</sup> DYCD information on the importance of an Education Specialist:  
[https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/Education\\_Specialist\\_Spotlight\\_Final.pdf](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/Education_Specialist_Spotlight_Final.pdf)

## **Mental Health**

- **Provide greater clarity on mental health supports providers will be required to offer.** The current language in the concept paper does not provide adequate information on mental health training and services required, liability in an emergency, or protocol around decision-making related to mental health needs and crises, including if the afterschool Director, the NYCPS Principal, or another stakeholder or staff would be the decision maker in a crisis. It is unfair to assign such tasks to unlicensed and uncertified staff. The addition of this role raises numerous questions that need clarification within the complex New York State and City regulated context of providing mental health care for young people and their families in a diverse city like New York.
- **Reconsider new requirements around the role of afterschool staff in providing mental health services to ensure that qualified, experienced and appropriately licensed and credentialed staff are providing appropriate support.** The Concept Paper requires providers to have on-site mental health supports in the case of a crisis, and requires providers to offer wellness and social-emotional group sessions on an ongoing basis.<sup>4</sup> There are many issues with requiring untrained, uncertified, and unlicensed afterschool educators to make decisions around young children's mental health; only appropriately trained mental health professionals should make such decisions and provide services. Given the rise in mental health needs among children and youth, it is important to rely on professionals and not require afterschool staff to provide services they are not equipped to offer. DYCD should instead support afterschool staff in offering referrals to appropriate care, as well as provide concrete resources to enable sites to have qualified mental health professionals on site. If DYCD wants providers to be supportive in the referral process, they must provide explicit guidance on liaising with school staff given HIPPA protections and not disclosing IEPs.
- **Unless the PPP rate is increased, DYCD must lower the requirements they have outlined for the mental health community partnerships.** DYCD must give providers a clear referral plan with a list of mental health providers that are free and low cost. This cannot be made into an unfunded mandate for each afterschool provider to create this list or attempt to find hospitals or licensed mental health providers to provide this free of cost. Afterschool groups shouldering the mental health assessment and referrals of kids in crisis is not ideal, as it is not their primary role and they are not in a clinical setting. When requesting hospitals or mental health providers to sign off on community partnerships over the past three years, CBOs in our network have been denied simply due to medical and licensed mental health providers' lack of capacity to accept new patients. Without additional funding added, this requirement will be difficult or impossible for providers to fulfill.
- **Invest in mental health services for young people in afterschool programs.** To have a robust mental health system for children and youth, there must be a deep investment to

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<sup>4</sup> Page 12, Mental Health Programming, section viii, d

support the true cost of services, including licensed mental health providers and other professionals. A model that has proven successful is the community schools model, which allows for funds to go to a consultant or subcontractor mental health partner. It also allows for a tiered intervention option for the mental health provider's response, so it is clearer how they are to support the afterschool program through staff training, support/engagement with families and/or crisis interventions. We urge the City to invest in additional mental health resources to help support students being served through afterschool programs.

### **Trainings and Alignment with NYC Public Schools**

- **Provide greater clarity on requirements related to Social Emotional Learning.**
  - For providers with multiple sites, will they need to coordinate different SEL frameworks and training if each school has a different model? Or is alignment with the DOE school site's SEL framework fully optional, despite DYCD referring to the required School Partnership agreement on page 16?
  - Are providers responsible for that cost in addition to the price of the model itself, or would afterschool providers be covered by the schools' expenses/training of staff in their chosen SEL as part of the School Partnership? There appears to be no money in the rate for these additional costs.
  - Providers should have authority over choosing the models that work best with the communities and youth they work with. Allowing this flexibility can ensure that culturally relevant and responsive models are chosen.
- **Provide greater clarity on requirements related to NYC Reads and NYC Solves and other allowable evidence-based models and frameworks that enhance afterschool programming:**
  - What is the plan and timeline for providers to be trained to align with policies and initiatives set out by the concept paper?
  - Who will be responsible for ensuring providers receive training?
  - What are the opportunities for afterschool providers to use proven STEM, Literacy, and Academic afterschool curricula that are evidence based or have been successful in afterschool contexts?

### **Community Engagement Requirements**

- **Modify requirements related to Subcontractors.**
  - **Subcontracting cannot be a mandate.** Many providers have the speciality staff needed to provide services. Requiring providers to use a minimum of 10% of their budget to hire subcontractors or consultants is not an effective utilization of budgets. It should be the provider's choice to subcontract. Since this arrangement requires a contract, the legal responsibility ultimately rests with the afterschool provider. As such, it makes sense for them to have a say in selecting trusted vendors or staff that they know will reliably deliver, at whatever level makes the most sense for their specific program site.

- **Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE).** We support efforts to enhance partnerships with MWBEs. However, we need more clarity about DYCD's new emphasis to allocate 10-30% of the budget to MWBE contractors which will present compliance and capacity issues. It is uncertain if MWBE providers will be available to meet the contract needs when many providers face challenges in retaining them due to their lack of capacity. As capacity is a serious concern, it would be implausible in practice simply due to the lack of available MWBE providers to meet the need for these 700+ contracts. We urge DYCD to provide a list of approved MWBE youth development, literacy, and STEM providers.

#### **Outcomes, Tracking and Evaluation**

- **Revise evaluation of programs based on attendance and fully fund programs in order to meet enrollment targets.** Because the rates for afterschool are so low, programs cannot fully hire, meaning they cannot fully enroll. If the City wants certain enrollment targets to be met, these programs must be fully funded.
- **Ensure students with disabilities are able to access programs by providing busing upon the completion of the afterschool program at 6pm, and by ensuring students receive the supports and services they need.** We urge cohesion between DYCD and NYCPS to ensure that transportation is secured and that any supports offered to students during the school day – such as paraprofessionals – transfer into the afterschool sessions as well.

#### **RFP Turnaround Time**

- **Provide at least 8-12 weeks to respond to an RFP for COMPASS and an RFP for SONYC.** The given turnaround for the RFP is 5 weeks, which is not nearly enough time for providers to be able to submit meaningful applications for all of their programs, especially since the PASSport system is known to be challenging.

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C4C members are deeply committed to ensuring all New York City children have access to safe, enriching, and high-quality afterschool programs. C4C urges the City Council to support DYCD in their efforts to adopt these recommendations that will strengthen COMPASS and SONYC programs, protect equity, and ensure sustainability across the afterschool sector.

Please reach out to Caitlyn Passaretti at [cpassaretti@cccnewyork.org](mailto:cpassaretti@cccnewyork.org) for any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Leslie Platt Zolov   Laurie Basloe   Karen Curlee  
Bharat Didwania   Gabriel Gomez   Laura Patinkin Urken

**Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper  
Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair  
Thursday, September 18, 2025**

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper. I am writing to advocate for the crucial role of arts education in afterschool programs.

My name is Katie Palmer. I am the Executive Director of Together in Dance, based in Long Island City, Queens. Together in Dance's mission is to, through Dance and Musical Theater, empower individuals to use their creativity and work collaboratively to connect to the world around them. Together in Dance builds community among students, families, educators, and other professionals who learn together so that the arts continue to be an integral part of their lives. We serve over 3,000 students annually across 8 schools, unlocking their innate creativity through movement exercises, student-devised choreography, and a trauma-aware approach,

Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development. By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people and help them develop 21st-century life skills.

I have seen firsthand how arts education impacts young people. The arts are such a powerful way for people to cultivate a sense of belonging. Shared art making fosters a sense of community and reduces feelings of isolation and pressure. Within a school setting it's a unique way for students to engage with each other: up out of their desks and interacting through their imagination where there is no "right" answer. Even students who are learning English are able to contribute non-verbally through arts programming, gaining the confidence and connection to continue to grow in English-speaking settings.

New York City's existing arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource for enriching afterschool programs. I urge the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Shift the focus from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) to recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP:** DYCD's RFP for afterschool programs must explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components and recognize the costs associated with providing



professional arts instruction. DYCD should also ensure that arts programming is delivered by qualified teaching artists and/or arts organizations to guarantee the highest quality of direct service while offering employment opportunities to NYC's cultural workforce.

- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage partnerships with local arts organizations and artists to fill Activity Specialist roles with highly-qualified Teaching Artists.
- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Arts is a proven medium for helping youth develop SEL skills, with clear documented research on the intersection of arts education and competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of these recommendations. Investing in arts education is an investment in our future, and a crucial component of a comprehensive afterschool expansion strategy.



Katie Palmer

Executive Director, Together in Dance



**New York City Council Oversight Hearing – Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**

**New York City Council Committee on Children and Youth**

**Honorable Althea Stevens, Chair**

**Submitted by:**

**Faith Behum, UJA-Federation of New York**

**September 18, 2025**

Thank you, Chairperson Stevens, and members of the Committee on Children and Youth, for holding this oversight hearing and for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Faith Behum, and I am a Manager of Government and External Relations at UJA-Federation of New York.

Established more than 100 years ago, UJA-Federation of New York is one of the nation's largest local philanthropies. Central to UJA's mission is to care for those in need—identifying and meeting the needs of New Yorkers of all backgrounds and Jews everywhere. UJA supports an expansive network of nearly 100 nonprofit organizations serving the most vulnerable and allocates over \$185 million annually to address poverty and food insecurity, nurture mental health and well-being, strengthen Jewish life, and respond to crises across New York City, Westchester, and Long Island. UJA-Federation of New York is also a steering committee member of the Campaign for Children (C4C); a coalition focused on protecting and investing in early childcare education and youth services. C4C's advocacy centers on supporting community-based organizations and ensuring New York City's children and youth have access to early childhood education, afterschool and summer programs.

Nonprofits in UJA's network oversee COMPASS and/or SONYC afterschool programs throughout New York City. These nonprofits recognize the resource they provide to children, youth and their families. For parents and guardians, available and affordable afterschool programs provide a respite for them when they are unable to be with their children at the end of the school day. For children and youth, afterschool programs offer a place where they can prepare for the next school day and learn new skills. UJA is grateful that the Adams' Administration has recognized the importance of these programs by increasing the number of COMPASS program participants and introducing a COMPASS/SONYC concept paper that aims to improve the system.

In FY 2026, when additional slots were added to the COMPASS system, the rates for the new slots were not increased. While providers supported the Administration's commitment to offering additional afterschool programs to families in their communities, many were disappointed to learn that the new slots would continue to be reimbursed with outdated price per participant rates that do not cover the true cost of overseeing high quality afterschool programs. Because of this, many providers decided not to be considered to oversee the slots. Those who did express interest in serving additional children were notified in August, less than a month before programming was to start, that they were awarded the slots. This significantly delayed hiring and the attainment of a School Age Child Care (SACC) license that the programs are required to obtain to oversee afterschool programs. Providers also said because the budget was so small for the expansion slots, they had to be very strategic with how they were using funding to meet the needs of the children in their programs. While afterschool providers recognize that families in their communities need access to more afterschool programs, the late announcement of the additional slots accompanied with the inadequate funding has made it extremely challenging to expand the program.

The introduction of the COMPASS/SONYC concept paper was a welcome development to nonprofit staff and advocates. City funded afterschool providers' contracts are over ten years old resulting in programs being currently underpaid for programs. Besides the lack of suitable funds for these programs they also have been operating on outdated contractual requirements. Since the last COMPASS/SONYC RFP was released, children and youth have endured a global pandemic that impacted their ability to learn and their mental health. This alone was reason enough to evaluate current afterschool models and identify new ways to serve the changing needs of children and youth.

UJA appreciates the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Administration developing a COMPASS/SONYC concept paper that presents increased price per participant rates as well as program structures that aim to serve the changing needs of children across New York City. This is a good starting point towards developing an afterschool system that more sufficiently rewards providers for their work and will strengthen programs for children. However, to put the afterschool system on the path to truly strengthening the system, the following issues that were identified by afterschool providers in the UJA network must be addressed in the upcoming RFP.

1. **Contract Dates/Notification of Awards:** Contracts are proposed to begin 8/1/2026 and programming to begin 9/1/2026. This is a tight timeline considering programs will not be paid for any work related to this contract before 8/1/2026. Simply finding enough staff and training them in four weeks is extremely difficult. Contracts must begin early enough to allow sufficient time for developing programs. Programs awarded contracts must be notified at least four months before programming starts to provide enough time for nonprofits to secure SACC licenses.
2. **Payment:** Timeliness of compensation was not addressed in the concept paper. Currently, many nonprofits with DYCD contracts have been waiting for years to be compensated for completed work. DYCD must include language in the RFP that will detail their commitment to COMPASS contracts receiving prompt payment.
3. **Price Per Participant Rates:** \$3,900 per participant is too low of a rate for SONYC programs. The concept paper also mentions that 10% of funds need to be used for consultants and this will limit a nonprofit's ability to increase salaries for their afterschool workforce. Neither the price for participant for elementary (\$6,800) or middle school (\$3,900) include cost escalators. This is a six-year contract and what DYCD is proposing to pay nonprofits will not cover the true cost of overseeing programming, especially as the contract ages. Lastly there is no indication that start-up costs will be covered.

UJA supports United Neighborhood's Houses recommendation to increase the price per participant for COMPASS to \$10,728 for a twelve-month contract. For SONYC, rates should be increased to at least \$5,500 per participant for school-year contracts and \$7,682 for twelve-month contracts. A cost-of-living adjustment tied to the consumer price index must also be included in the rates as well as built-in annual costs for other than personal services (OTPS) due to increasing costs of food, transportation, and insurance.

4. **Staff:** A clearer definition of responsibilities of the content specialist must be included. Additional overhead staff (like Activity Specialist and Content Specialist) and the need for specialized staff (like music or art teachers) takes significant financial resources that the proposed middle school rate of \$3,900 per participant will not be able to cover sufficiently. Center-based contracts must be funded at a higher rate to account for additional staff positions.
5. **Remote Programming:** More specifics and clarity of expectations for remote programming are needed. For example, what type of attendance is expected for remote programming? Will DYCD provide access to technology if a child needs it to participate in remote programming? Will nonprofits be expected to provide remote programming when schools are closed (either expected like school holidays or unexpected snow days)?
6. **Collaboration with schools:** More information on how nonprofits will be expected to collaborate with schools is needed. Partnership agreements with schools are required and this was not addressed in the concept paper.

7. **Parent engagement:** More specifics are needed on what is expected of nonprofits and how they communicate with parents and/or guardians
8. **Mental Health:** Afterschool programs are an extension of school day programming, they work with each other to support the students involved in their programming. The concept paper frames mental health referrals and supports the afterschool program's responsibility. In practice, the afterschool program works with the school to make sure the child is receiving the supports they need and this needs to be detailed more. For example, the concept paper does not acknowledge that afterschool programs already must notify schools when one of their participants requires mental health resources. More specifics on expectations for nonprofits involvement in mental health services for participants are needed including information on how nonprofits will be evaluated on meeting mental health needs for participants.
9. **Summer Component:** Expectations of summer programming for elementary participants are unclear. Providers need to know what they are agreeing to oversee. The concept paper states, some SONYC programs will operate year-round, but funding and selection of those programs is not part of this RFP process. Providers would like to know upfront if they will be expected to run a summer program if they serve middle school children during the school year. Is DYCD planning an entirely separate RFP for middle school summer programs? Does DYCD have any projections of how many middle school children they expect to serve during the summer moving forward or where those slots will be located? Will District 75 children and children on IEPs in general education classrooms be included in the summer programming and what additional resources will these children receive if they are?
10. **Attendance:** The concept paper states, COMPASS and SONYC programs will maintain 100% enrollment throughout the school year. How is DYCD defining 100% enrollment for school year programs? It is sometimes difficult to have families commit to attending programming five days a week due to their child being involved in other afterschool activities. Will there be any flexibility for providers with meeting 100% enrollment?
11. **Inclusion:** COMPASS is funded and structured to serve children in general education placements. However, afterschool providers must take all children who apply for their programs. Additional resources are needed to properly serve District 75 children and/or children on IEPs in general education classrooms who attend COMPASS programs. The support these children are receiving during the school day should be available during the afterschool program.

### **Conclusion**

UJA-Federation of New York thanks the City Council for hosting this hearing and providing this opportunity to testify on the COMPASS concept paper. If you have any questions, please contact me at behumf@ujafedny.org.



**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses  
Before the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Council Member Althea Stevens, Chair**

***Oversight: Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper***

**Submitted by Kate Connolly, Senior Policy Analyst  
September 18, 2025**

Thank you, Chair Stevens and members of the New York City Council, for the opportunity to testify. My name is Kate Connolly, and I am Senior Policy Analyst at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). UNH is a policy and social change organization representing neighborhood settlement houses that reach 800,000 New Yorkers from all walks of life.

A progressive leader for more than 100 years, UNH is stewarding a new era for New York's settlement house movement. We mobilize our members and their communities to advocate for good public policies and promote strong organizations and practices that keep neighborhoods resilient and thriving for all New Yorkers. UNH leads advocacy and partners with our members on a broad range of issues including civic and community engagement, neighborhood affordability, healthy aging, early childhood education, adult literacy, and youth development. We also provide customized professional development and peer learning to build the skills and leadership capabilities of settlement house staff at all levels.

UNH thanks the Council for its dedicated advocacy on behalf of and alongside the afterschool providers and community members who utilize these programs. While we were not successful in gaining additional funding to support existing programs, we are pleased that afterschool has remained part of the public discourse. We see the recently released concept paper and the future Request for Proposals (RFP) as another key opportunity to strengthen the existing afterschool system in NYC, and to prepare for future expansion. We hope DYCD will take provider feedback into consideration when finalizing the RFP to ensure the new model reflects the reality of what families and young people need today, as well as the inputs and funding needed to support high-quality programming.

COMPASS Elementary and SONYC providers have struggled for years with the repeated extension of afterschool contracts. The delay to reprocur these contracts has resulted in low staff wages, shrinking budgets due to increased supply costs, and frustration over an outdated program model. We are excited to see progress in the procurement process and look forward to 10 more years of high-quality afterschool programming in New York City.

After the release of the Concept Paper on May 30th, UNH convened our settlement house members in small group conversations, as well as organizations representative of the larger youth development field through the Youth Development Collective (previously known as the Neighborhood Family Services Roundtable). In addition to formal meetings, we also engaged in conversations around this concept paper with individual community-based organizations, both those who do and do not currently have COMPASS contracts, as well as other advocates focused on city-funded afterschool. With their feedback, we have developed the following recommendations. Some of these recommendations offer alternatives to what is currently laid out in the concept paper, while some are requests for clarification where the intent of the language was unclear. We hope there will be further opportunities for conversation and feedback before the upcoming Request for Proposals.

Although our full response<sup>1</sup> to the concept paper includes additional questions and recommendations, the major areas we see a need to revise based on feedback from current and hopeful afterschool providers are:

- Funding model
- Staffing requirements
- Mental health component
- Summer programming

### **Funding Model**

As DYCD is aware, current providers have struggled to operate programs with current low funding rates that sometimes date back to 2011. With significant increases to minimum wage, ballooning inflation, and increased participant need in the face of a global pandemic and growing unaffordability, this has been one of the top concerns for providers (and the youth development sector at large) going into the release of the concept paper. The increased rates in the concept paper acknowledge this concern, but the proposed price per participant (PPP) rates are still inadequate to properly fund 12-month contracts or the additional requirements laid out in the concept paper.

In a November 2023 report, [\*Assessing the True Cost of Implementing High-Quality Afterschool Programming in New York City\*](#), UNH worked with our members to develop model budgets for both school-year and year-round afterschool models. Although the model budgets laid out in this report are based on the current COMPASS Elementary and SONYC requirements and do not take into account the continued inflation over the past 2 years, they provide a useful baseline for understanding the minimum funding necessary to operate high-quality afterschool programs. We were disappointed that the concept paper did not take into account feedback from providers on the pitfalls of low funding rates. We urge DYCD to correct this and issue an RFP that will fund programs at adequate rates for the duration of the contract. If the future awards will be for six-year contracts, consideration must be made to fund programs appropriate for not only the first year, but also the sixth year. Standard cost of living adjustments (COLAs) and cost

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<sup>1</sup> UNH's Response to the 2025 COMPASS Concept Paper can be found here: [https://assets.nationbuilder.com/unhny/pages/23/attachments/original/1755875431/UNH\\_Response\\_to\\_2025\\_COMPASS\\_Concept\\_Paper.pdf?1755875431](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/unhny/pages/23/attachments/original/1755875431/UNH_Response_to_2025_COMPASS_Concept_Paper.pdf?1755875431).

escalators should be used to ensure contracts are sustainable and responsive to the current economic reality.

If DYCD is unable to raise the PPP rates in the RFP, DYCD should re-evaluate the programmatic and staffing requirements in accordance with the lower funding rates. They must not ask providers to deliver underfunded services.

In addition to the low funding rates, we also have concerns about the 10% subcontracting requirement laid out in the concept paper. Requiring a minimum of 10% of every program budget to go towards subcontractors is unrealistic and further strains the low proposed price per participant rates. Although the concept paper stresses the importance of community partnerships, there is no explanation given for how the minimum subcontractor requirement was reached. There are many ways to foster community partnerships that are not so rigid and allow for localized approaches to programming.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Increase the proposed Price Per Participant<sup>2</sup>.**
  - **Increase the base COMPASS Elementary PPP to \$10,728 per participant for a 12-month contract for school year and summer programming.**
  - **Increase the SONYC PPP to \$5,500 per participant for school-year contracts, and \$7,682 per participant for 12-month contracts.**
  - **Fund center-based contracts at a higher PPP rate to account for the additional required staff positions and facilities maintenance.**
- **Include a COLA tied to the consumer price index in years two through six, and include a built-in annual inflator for OTPS as costs for food, transportation, insurance and other supplies continue to rise.<sup>3</sup>**
- **Change the subcontractor requirement to list a maximum of the total program budget to be used instead of a minimum amount.**
- **Share a list of high-quality subcontractors by subject area to contracted organizations.**

### **Staffing Requirements**

Based on listening sessions and conversations with current contractors, there are several concerns with the proposed staffing requirements. Most concerns focus on the increased qualification requirements for most staff positions. This section of the concept paper and forthcoming Request for Proposals warrants additional review and justification from DYCD. While we agree that it is important to have qualified staff working in afterschool programs, the ongoing nonprofit staffing crisis requires flexibility and support from the City to ensure that staffing requirements are achievable and do not undermine program stability.

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<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed explanation of the assumptions and costs used to calculate these rates, please see the narrative and model budgets in UNH's report, [\*Assessing the True Cost of Implementing High-Quality Afterschool Programming in New York City\*](#).

<sup>3</sup> Examples of model budgets with 3% annual COLAs and cost escalators can be found in the above referenced report.



Both the Group Leader and Youth Worker roles have historically been entry-level positions, allowing young adults and youth, respectively, an entry point into the youth development field. However, the education and experience requirements laid out in the concept paper reflect a significant increase in the expectations for individuals being hired into these roles, while the position responsibilities have not changed much. Within the context of a years-long staffing crisis in the nonprofit sector, these inflated requirements do not take into account either the need to foster a pipeline of youth development workers, or the competition these positions face with other minimum wage jobs. The proposed requirements for Youth Workers laid out in the concept paper - that individuals must be at least 16 years of age with a high school diploma or GED, or have one year of experience - are unrealistic. This role is an important entry-level position that provides older youth with their first job in a setting that is already set up to support them both professionally and personally. Maintaining the restrictive requirements would effectively end a pipeline of workers into the youth development field, and add to the current staffing crisis.

Additionally, the proposed qualifications for the Content Specialist role mirror those required for the Program Director. This creates a potential barrier to hiring as the Content Specialist is a part-time role, but requires both a four-year degree and extensive supervisory experience. This puts smaller community-based organizations at a particular disadvantage as they may not be able to offer additional hours to a Content Specialist across multiple programs in order to have the role be full-time, as we expect larger organizations to do.

The inclusion of mental health components in the concept paper are clearly in response to the stated needs of current contractors and families. However, as many providers will not have mental health professionals staffing afterschool programs, it is important to clarify the responsibilities and requirements of staff members fulfilling the mental health components laid out in this model. Understandably, mental health provision for minors in New York City and New York State is highly regulated. This part of the model should be closely evaluated to ensure that HIPAA regulations, administrative burden on providers, and cost of things like cyber security insurance and other requirements in order to comply with state mandates around personal health information are taken into account regarding both the funding rates and requirements on the contractors.

The contrast in expectations for school-based and center-based programs is particularly stark in the staffing requirements. While the three additional positions (Janitor, Security, and Front Desk Reception) required for center-based programs reflect the additional demands of running afterschool out of a non-school site, the concept paper does not clarify whether this will be accompanied by funding to cover these staff. Requiring three additional staff positions to be funded out of the same price per participant rate is unrealistic and will aggravate the inequities between center-based and school-based programs.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Make the education qualifications for the Content Specialist more flexible, with the supervisory experience optional.**
- **Allow Group Leader and Youth Worker positions to be entry-level positions, reflecting how these roles are used in current afterschool programs.**
  - **Remove the experience requirement for Group Leaders**
  - **Remove educational requirements of Youth Workers.**

- **Clarify the requirements for who is eligible to fulfill the mental health requirements laid out in the concept paper.**
- **Fund center-based contracts at a higher rate to account for the three additional required staff positions.**

### **Mental health component**

The mental health needs among youth have grown significantly over the past 10 years and, especially, since the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate DYCD's recognition that afterschool providers are often faced with these needs, and may be in a prime position to connect young people with care. However, assessing mental health needs and accessing mental health supports are complex and must be done with care and qualified staff. Additionally, there are currently serious delays in accessing pediatric mental health supports<sup>4</sup>, which will impact how quickly afterschool contractors are able to connect participants to clinical services. The upcoming Request for Proposals must clarify the specific responsibilities of contractors around mental health supports, and take into account the proposed qualifications and pricing structure laid out in other parts of the concept paper.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Share a citywide referral list of youth mental health support providers.**
- **Limit contractors' responsibilities for mental health supports to referrals, with options to provide further support based on the capacity of the provider.**
- **Clarify if a referral to the school site's School Counselor or School Social Worker is sufficient to meet the requirements of the contract.**
- **Collaborate with other city agencies and partners to provide more in-depth professional development opportunities to contractors on the topic of mental health support.**

### **Summer programming**

We commend DYCD for making the COMPASS Elementary model a 12-month model. This will help improve staff hiring and retention, which will bring more stability and experience to programs across the City. We urge DYCD to do the same for SONYC contracts, providing consistency for participants, schools and contractor staff.

However, the sections describing summer programming are vague in how contractors should expect the summer months to be structured. With the hours of operation being listed as 8AM to 6PM, it seems there may be an opportunity to envision new models for summer programming.

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<sup>4</sup> According to a report by the Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids, in New York State, 3 out of 4 young people covered by Medicaid or Child Health Plus are unable to access outpatient behavioral health services. This is partly due to chronically low reimbursement rates, which has caused a staffing shortage amongst behavioral health professionals. (Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids, [Solutions to New York's Youth Behavioral Health Crisis](#))

Despite having completed four years of Summer Rising, the City has released little data on its efficacy and has not conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the model. In response to questions from settlement houses and their communities about the efficacy of this model, UNH conducted a study of Summer Rising, composed of a digital survey of 700 parents and CBO providers, and 7 focus groups of middle school participants. In November 2024, UNH released [\*One Size Does Not Fit All: Assessing the Efficacy of the Summer Rising Program in Meeting the Needs of New York City Families\*](#). Some of our key findings were:

- Many families are dependent on free summer programming provided by the city. 58% of surveyed parents said they did not have a back-up option if Summer Rising was not available, with the percentage rising to 64% for low-income families.
- Middle schoolers expressed frustration with the DOE-led academics. 87% of focus group participants disagreed or felt neutral in regards to the statement “I feel engaged in the morning session” of Summer Rising.”
- Despite recognizing the value of summer academic enrichment, many parents participating in the survey expressed frustration over a lack of communication around the DOE-led academic program. Parents reported being unclear about what curriculum was being used, who their students’ teachers were, and if their child’s learning needs were being met. This was in contrast to reports of regular communication from the CBO staff.
- There are widespread concerns whether students with IEPs and English Language Learners are receiving appropriate accommodations. Over half of CBO staff said that a shortage of paraprofessional support for students with IEPs was one of the most pressing challenges. Additionally, some focus group participants who identify as English Language Learners shared that they were excluded from the DOE-led academic portion and given arts & crafts projects instead.

Additionally, on March 13, 2025, the Department of Education released the Summer Rising 2024 Impact Analysis, which used spring 2024 and fall 2024 standardized academic data to compare the academic performance of young people who participated in Summer Rising to those who did not participate in the program. From this data, we can see that there were moderate academic gains in the elementary school participants. However, this was not true for middle school students. Even for middle school participants who attended Summer Rising programming for 20+ days, there was no statistically significant impact on Math scores. Furthermore, when compared to other students in the City, middle school Summer Rising participants who attended Summer Rising programming for 20+ days actually fared worse in reading scores than the comparison group. DOE’s own impact analysis supports our findings that Summer Rising is not an appropriate model for all middle school youth.

The summer months offer young people a break from the traditional school schedule, and allow more time for outside play, postsecondary exploration, field trips, positive peer socialization, and hands-on learning activities. Higher-income families often have the option to pick from different summer options depending on their child’s preference, but most low-income families are reliant

on city-funded programs to ensure a safe summer placement. Youth and families should have a voice in deciding what kind of programming is right for them, and, if youth, parents, and staff are reporting frustration with the current model, the City should pivot to alternative models that have the potential to re-engage them. Additionally, the poor attendance of Summer Rising programming shows us that young people and families are voting with their feet. While an emphasis on academics can help some students, research has shown that the most important factor for impact is engagement - if students don't attend the program, there can be no impact.<sup>5</sup> Allowing for multiple summer programming models<sup>6</sup> would also provide district-level flexibility to better serve English Language Learners and students with disabilities. In the current model, there is little room for flexibility and limited resources to provide these young people with the proper support.

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Maintain currently proposed language to make COMPASS Elementary contracts 12-month contracts.**
- **Expand the SONYC model to allow for 12-month contracts for sites providing summer programming.**
- **Allow for a variety of summer programming models in both COMPASS Elementary and SONYC contracts to suit the needs of different populations of students. There should be further clarity in the upcoming RFP about the different summer programming options available to contractors.**

In addition to the above, the concept paper does not lay out how DYCD will choose new afterschool sites, only stating “the list of eligible sites in the RFPs will include additional public and non-public schools to align with the recent announcements regarding increases in funding, as well as neighborhoods eligible for Center-Based funding” (page 5). In a recently released report, [Mapping the Gap: Expanding Afterschool Access in New York City](#), UNH mapped the current landscape of afterschool programming in New York City, and was able to assess the level of current afterschool access by Neighborhood Tabulation Area (NTA). In a review of the 40 new afterschool sites starting up this school year<sup>7</sup> we were pleased to see that almost all of the new sites are located in areas with no or limited current access to afterschool programming.<sup>8</sup> We hope the 5,000 new slots added with the upcoming RFP and the 10,000 new slots to be added in FY28 will be placed with the same consideration, aiming to offer access to more neighborhoods and families.

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<sup>5</sup> Diehl Consulting Group. (2023). Indiana 21st Century Community Learning Centers Statewide Evaluation Report: 2021-2022.

<sup>6</sup> Examples of alternative summer programming models are provided in our [Recommendations for Summer 2025](#) document.

<sup>7</sup> A full list of the new sites can be found on DYCD's website: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/after-school/compass-expansion.page>

<sup>8</sup> The only new site in an NTA that already has moderate access to afterschool is Harlem (North) where there is both a high economic need index and high student enrollment.

Please see the full report (linked above) for an assessment of afterschool access by neighborhood, but below is a summary of our main findings:

- NYC is much closer to achieving universal access for middle school programming than for elementary school programming.
- The majority of NYC neighborhoods have limited access to afterschool for elementary-aged children, with 22 NTAs that contain an elementary school having no publicly-funded afterschool program.
- Despite displaying high economic hardship, many NTAs in the Bronx have limited access to elementary and/or middle school afterschool programs, showing a need for further investments in this borough.

We hope DYCD will similarly assess the total landscape of programming and projected needs of individual neighborhoods when determining the location of new sites.

Thank you for your time. For any follow up questions, I can be contacted at [kconnolly@unhny.org](mailto:kconnolly@unhny.org)



## **TESTIMONY: Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**

**To:** New York City Council, Committee on Children and Youth

**From:** United Way of New York City

**Date:** September 18, 2025

Chair Stevens and members of the Committee on Children and Youth:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of United Way of New York City (UWNYC) in strong support of the plan to expand after-school programming for NYC students, and to thank the Council for its continuous advocacy for universal after-school programs and increased after-school funding.

United Way of New York City supports the goals of DYCD's Concept Paper, and we respectfully recommend for the city to allocate an additional \$130 million annual investment for year-round programming and youth workforce development, which would bring the total after-school budget to \$885 million each year.

We estimate that offering SONYC summer programming to 49,912 students would require an additional \$110 million and that funding youth workforce development would require \$20 million. We are eager to work with the City Council to help identify and advocate for additional investments and policy changes to support widespread and accessible after-school programs for NYC's youth.

In its concept paper, the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) rightfully recognizes the relationship between the quality of after-school programs and the well-being of young New Yorkers. Students receive crucial academic and social support, while parents can focus on their work knowing that their children are safe. The impact of after-school supervision spreads far beyond students and their parents—by diverting young people from risky behaviors, it invests in entire communities that ultimately benefit from improved public safety.

We are ready for New York to join other leading cities that are improving school performance as a result of effective after-school programming.

In Chicago, high school students participating in the After School Matters program have higher class attendance, lower course failures, and higher graduation rates than similar students who do not participate in the program. In Los Angeles, elementary school students attending LA's BEST after-school program were 20 percent less likely to drop out of school and 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities compared to matched nonparticipants. Researchers estimate that every dollar invested in LA's BEST saves the city \$2.5 in crime-related costs.



UWNYC thanks the Council for calling attention to these issues and for seeking progress on and analysis of the city's programs. Nearly four out of five families citywide cannot afford childcare for children between the ages of 6 and 12, and a family with one child in that age range might spend up to a quarter of their income on childcare alone. For most families, a lack of affordable childcare means lower income and less access to employment opportunities, translating into tangible losses in productivity for the economy.

This problem becomes especially dire in the summer, when the need for childcare expands from the afternoon to the full day. However, according to the current proposal in its concept paper, the DYCD will not guarantee funding for School's Out New York City (SONYC) summer programming. We ask that New York City offer year-round programming for school-age children so that their parents no longer have to face difficult choices between working and caring for their children.

UWNYC recently surveyed community-based organizations that collectively serve 47,500 youth through after-school programs in all five boroughs. Despite the essential work that they perform, these organizations face a host of barriers to delivering the quality and consistency in care that youth deserve. For example, it is extremely difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff due to the limited pathways for career advancement in the after-school field, as over 80 percent of the jobs in the after-school field are entry level, part-time jobs with no clear career pathway for advancement.

Investments in youth workforce development offer solutions to these challenges. UWNYC recommends recognizing and articulating a youth workforce development ladder beginning with Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) at minimum wage through more senior levels of employment that are also consistent with DYCD's Core Competencies of Youth Workers. Focusing on creating standard job descriptions and titles as well as standard educational and training requirements would make it easier for organizations to articulate career ladders and workers to envision career paths.

Every child deserves the opportunity to engage in academic and enrichment programs outside of school hours. We urge New York City to prioritize expanding after-school programs and increasing the current budget by \$130 million for FY27. We look forward to collaborating with the City Council on this important initiative, and we thank you for your commitment to building a safer, smarter, and more equitable city.

**Sincerely,**  
United Way of New York City





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## About Us

United Way of New York City has been serving low-income New Yorkers for over 85 years. As a backbone organization, we coordinate cross-sector efforts across food access, education, health equity, and economic mobility. Through a network of more than 600 community-based partners, we connect resources to where they're needed most and advocate for structural solutions to poverty. Our work centers equity, trust, and long-term impact—because every New Yorker deserves the opportunity to thrive.



William Jourdain, Executive Director, Woodside on the Move (WOTM)  
New York City Council  
Committee on Children and Youth  
Re: Oversight Hearing; **Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper**  
2025 September 18

**Good morning Honorable Chair Stevens, Council Members, and distinguished guests.**

My name is William Jourdain, and I am the Executive Director of Woodside on the Move (WOTM), a nonprofit that provides afterschool programming, housing services, tenant advocacy, and community development for families across New York City.

Every September, parents breathe a sigh of relief as school begins, but for working families, the hours after school ends remain a challenge. Afterschool programs are not a luxury; they are essential. They reinforce academics, provide safe environments, deter risky behaviors, and allow parents to fully participate in the workforce. They are infrastructure for families.

Yet too many neighborhoods remain “**afterschool deserts.**” While the city expanded seats to 220,000 students this summer, nearly 392,000 children remain without access. At WOTM, our waitlist alone exceeds **100 students annually**, a clear sign of unmet need.

Universal afterschool would be transformative. With adequate support, we could serve up to **150 more students**, hire **10–15 additional staff** including guidance counselors and social workers, and improve salaries so we can retain the educators our students depend on.

But for universal afterschool to succeed, systemic barriers must be addressed. Too often, nonprofits are forced into competition for limited funding instead of being supported to collaborate.

Last year, Woodside on the Move worked tirelessly to launch an afterschool program in a new school within our community. We invested significant time, energy, and even absorbed a revenue loss because we knew how critical it was for the students, families, and the Principal to have this resource. We moved forward with the understanding that a future RFP pipeline through DYCD would help sustain the program.

Instead, DYCD relocated another provider into the same school without our knowledge. The contract was split between us and a much larger nonprofit with far greater resources. The outcome was not one strong, cohesive program serving 120 students, but two diluted programs in the same building, leaving families confused and children underserved.

This practice pits nonprofits against one another, wastes resources, and ultimately undermines program quality.

We have to appropriately strategize and implement equitable actions for universal afterschool. In order for it to succeed, universal afterschool must be:

- **Accessible to all students**, regardless of income or grade level.
- **Equitably funded**, so nonprofits can collaborate instead of compete.
- Supported with **timely payments** and access to school facilities after hours.

As we approach a pivotal election year, I urge you to make afterschool a **top priority**. Afterschool is not optional, it is vital to our children's success, family stability, and the strength of our city.

**It is time to make afterschool truly universal for all New Yorkers.**

Thank you for your time and commitment.

William Jourdain,  
Executive Director  
Woodside On The Move



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**New York City Council  
Committee on Children and Youth, Honorable Althea Stevens, Chair**

**Testimony of YMCA of Greater New York  
Submitted Chelsea Baytemur, Director, Policy and Advocacy**

**New York City Council Oversight Hearing  
Afterschool Expansion and Department of Youth and Community Development's COMPASS  
and SONYC Concept Paper**

**September 18, 2025**

I respectfully submit the following testimony on behalf of the YMCA of Greater New York.

The YMCA of Greater New York is committed to empowering youth, improving health, and strengthening community. With 24 YMCA branches and more than 100 community sites across New York City, the YMCA is among the largest providers of human services spanning from infancy to older adults and an important anchor, convener, and catalyst for transformational change in underserved communities.

For decades, DYCD and its provider partners have demonstrated the impact of flexible, community-driven programming through initiatives such as Beacon, Cornerstone, Community Schools, and COMPASS. The YMCA Afterschool program, which includes seven Beacon, eight SONYC, twenty-six COMPASS, ten Community Schools, and two Cornerstone sites, empowers nearly 15,000 children and teens each day. The YMCA plays a vital role in helping young people build on the academic knowledge they gain during school hours while also fostering social-emotional growth, strengthening peer relationships, and boosting confidence. These critical skills empower youth to thrive both within our program sites and beyond. For countless New York City families, afterschool programs like ours are not just an enrichment opportunity, they are an essential part of their support system. High-quality afterschool programs combat learning loss, promote social-emotional development, prepare youth for the workforce, and provide reliable care that working families depend on.

We are grateful to Chair Stevens and the City Council for their steadfast leadership in championing afterschool, and we view DYCD's upcoming RFPs as pivotal opportunities to strengthen this system. While the Fiscal Year 2026 Adopted Budget included a \$21 million investment to create 5,000 new K–5 afterschool seats, along with a commitment to increase total

funding to \$331 million by Fiscal Year 2027, we remain deeply concerned that this funding still falls short of covering the true cost of running high-quality programs. An underfunded RFP, coupled with a lack of afterschool investment on the State and federal level, threaten the sector's capacity to deliver enriching and robust programming, and ultimately erodes both access to afterschool and the trust families have in providers.

At the State level, the lack of investment in the Learning and Enrichment After School Program Supports (LEAPS) has compounded the challenges facing New York City's afterschool system. The City lost 6,738 state-funded slots under LEAPS, nearly 4,000 in the Bronx, 2,000 in Queens, and 700 in Staten Island, leaving working families in high-need neighborhoods with fewer supportive options for their children. Only one-third of eligible applications were funded, and more than 48,000 additional children could have been served if the State had supported "eligible but not funded" programs. LEAPS also excludes middle and high school students, leaving older youth without sufficient supports, and the BOOST pilot is too limited in scale and largely excludes NYC.

Furthermore, at the federal level, the outlook for youth funding remains uncertain, with potential cuts that could directly undermine NYC's afterschool system. While both chambers have proposed level funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) at \$1.33 billion, this still falls far short of meeting demand, and the threat of broader cuts in House proposals, including a \$5 billion reduction to Title I and the elimination of full-service Community Schools and Preschool Development Grants, signals challenges with continued federal support. For NYC, where thousands of children rely on 21st CCLC-funded programs, even level funding amid inflation amounts to a cut, straining providers already grappling with State and City funding gaps. As Congress heads toward a likely continuing resolution, the uncertainty and potential reductions highlight the urgent need for stable, expanded investment to ensure afterschool remains accessible to NYC children and families.

Even as the City moves forward with its own RFP and modest program expansions, the efforts as planned will not replace the scale of what may be lost due to State and federal funding gaps. Which is why the City has a unique opportunity to fully fund a truly equitable, high-quality afterschool system that delivers on its promise for all New York City children and families.

In alignment with the Campaign for Children's recommendations, the YMCA urges the City to prioritize investments in a stable workforce, transparent program requirements, and sustainable funding.

### **Rates and Summer Programming**

- Current rates are outdated, do not reflect inflation, and cannot sustain year-round programming. We support the true cost of \$10,728 per participant for year-round COMPASS Elementary and \$7,682 for SONYC Middle School.
- Rate transparency and clarity around summer programming are critical. Providers cannot plan staffing or design full-year programs without knowing whether SONYC will continue under Summer Rising, be jointly funded, or allow provider-led summer models.

- The City must provide clarity on summer rates, requirements, and program models so programs can plan effectively for children and families.

### **Staffing and Workforce**

- The proposed staffing structure adds new responsibilities, such as mental health crisis intervention and college/career readiness, without corresponding increases in rates.
- Roles like the new “Content Specialist” must be adequately funded and should not dilute academic expertise.
- Youth Worker age and credential requirements need clarification to avoid unintentional hiring barriers.
- Unfunded mandates for new center-based roles (janitors, security, receptionists) will strain budgets and duplicate existing site resources.

### **Mental Health Supports**

- Afterschool providers are not licensed mental health professionals and should not be required to deliver clinical services, without the funding to hire licensed professionals.
- A successful model is the Community Schools approach, which funds subcontracted mental health professionals for training, family engagement, and crisis response. Without this kind of investment, children risk going without the mental health support they need to feel safe, seen, and successful in school. DYCD should prioritize sustainable, professional support that protects young people’s wellbeing, rather than passing unfunded mandates onto providers.
- DYCD must clarify protocols, liability, and referral pathways and provide resources for partnerships with licensed providers.

### **Program Quality and Alignment with Schools**

- Providers need flexibility to select culturally responsive SEL, literacy, and STEM models that best fit their communities.
- Costs for DOE-aligned training and curriculum cannot be pushed onto providers without additional funding.
- Clear timelines and support are needed for alignment with NYC Reads, NYC Solves, and other evidence-based initiatives.

### **Subcontracting and MWBE Requirements**

- Requiring that 10–30% of budgets go to subcontractors and MWBEs may not be feasible, given the limited pool of providers.
- Subcontracting should remain optional, not mandatory, and DYCD should provide approved MWBE lists to help programs comply without jeopardizing budgets.

### **Evaluation, Access, and RFP Process**

- Evaluation based on enrollment is unfair when rates prevent providers from hiring enough staff to meet targets. Programs must be fully funded to be held accountable.
- Ensure students with disabilities are able to access programs by providing busing upon the completion of the afterschool program at 6pm, and by ensuring students receive the support and services they need. We urge cohesion between DYCD and NYCPS to ensure that transportation is secured and that any support offered to students during the school day – such as paraprofessionals – transfer into the afterschool sessions as well.
- Providers need at least **8–12 weeks** to respond to the RFP; the proposed 5-week turnaround is unworkable.

### **Our Recommendations**

- Raise COMPASS and SONYC rates beginning in FY26, with a phased approach to full funding in FY27.
- Provide rate transparency and a clear summer plan for SONYC and COMPASS so providers can deliver true year-round programming.
- Revisit staffing and mental health requirements to ensure they are realistic, adequately funded, and supported by licensed professionals.
- Allow flexibility in subcontracting and curriculum models, while supporting providers with resources for compliance.
- Extend the RFP timeline to allow meaningful provider participation.
- The Y is deeply concerned that pre-K continues to be left out of afterschool program models. While we understand that ratios and some programming must be adjusted if serving younger participants, we believe families and communities will benefit by having a funded afterschool option catering to their needs.

If you have any questions, please contact Chelsea Baytemur, Director of Policy and Advocacy, at [cbaytemur@ymcanyc.org](mailto:cbaytemur@ymcanyc.org).



Jasmine “JRose” Rosario

Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD’s Concept Paper

Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair  
Thursday, September 18, 2025

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper. I am writing to advocate for the crucial role of arts education in afterschool programs.

My name is **Jasmine Rosario**, and I work as a **Teaching Artist with Youth Justice Network and founder of The Rose Garden Events in Queens, NY**. The mission of my work is to empower youth and marginalized communities through creative writing, spoken word, and performance as tools for healing and growth. Over the past decade, I have facilitated workshops across schools, libraries, and correctional facilities, serving hundreds of young people each year. My programs center on poetry, storytelling, and performance, creating safe and inclusive spaces where youth can express themselves authentically.

Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development. By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people and help them develop 21st-century life skills.

I have seen firsthand how arts education impacts young people. At Rikers Island, I’ve worked with incarcerated youth who, through poetry, gained confidence in sharing their voices and developed tools to process their trauma. In schools and community centers, I’ve witnessed shy students transform into leaders on stage, proud of their words and stories. These are not just moments of artistic expression, they are moments of empowerment that ripple into other parts of students’ lives, improving self-esteem, academic focus, and social skills.

New York City’s existing arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource for enriching afterschool programs. I urge the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD’s RFP.**
- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations.**

- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).**
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives.**

Thank you for your attention and consideration of these recommendations. Investing in arts education is an investment in our future, and a crucial component of a comprehensive afterschool expansion strategy. I implore you to see, hear and understand that no matter how you look at life, it all starts with the arts and we're here fighting so that it doesn't end with the arts.

**Sincerely,**

**Jasmine Rosario (aka JRose)**

Maira Duarte Quiroga, teaching artist for:  
BROOKLYN ARTS EXCHANGE, DANCEWAVE, AND PIONEERS GO EAST COLLECTIVE

Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Children & Youth  
Oversight - Afterschool Expansion and DYCD's Concept Paper

Hon. Althea Stevens, Chair  
Thursday, September 18, 2025

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing on Afterschool Expansion and the Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Concept Paper. I am writing to advocate for the crucial role of arts education in afterschool programs.

My name is Maira Duarte Quiroga, and I work as a teaching artist for the organizations Brooklyn Arts Exchange, Dancewave and Pioneers Go East Collective, providing arts enrichment in public schools, libraries, public parks and other cultural organizations across all 5 boroughs. In my work as a teaching artist I have visited over 40 public schools, and have served more than a thousand students, ages 3-15.

Arts are a critical access point for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, critical thinking, career readiness, and literacy development. By integrating the arts into STEAM-based afterschool programs, we can provide safe, inclusive spaces for young people and help them develop 21st-century life skills.

I have seen firsthand how arts education impacts young people. It provides them a space where they can both play and learn with others. Through practical tasks they are required to problem solve in groups and come up with creative solutions. There's no wrong answer in art, so students learn the value of participation, inquiry, curiosity, and dare to fail in a safe environment. Students don't get that anywhere else.

New York City's existing arts and cultural infrastructure is a vital resource for enriching afterschool programs. I urge the City Council to consider the following recommendations to ensure arts education is a central component of afterschool expansion:

- **Shift from STEM to STEAM:** Shift the focus from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) to recognize the vital role of arts in student development and engagement.
- **Require Professional Arts Instruction in DYCD's RFP:** DYCD's RFP for afterschool programs must explicitly solicit proposals with robust arts components and recognize the costs associated with providing professional arts instruction. DYCD should also ensure that arts programming is delivered by qualified teaching artists and/or arts organizations to guarantee the highest quality of direct service while offering employment opportunities to NYC's cultural workforce.

- **Encourage Partnership with Artists & Arts Organizations:** Require that a minimum percentage of program budgets be spent engaging specialist subcontractors, and encourage partnerships with local arts organizations and artists to fill Activity Specialist roles with highly-qualified Teaching Artists.
- **Recognize the Role of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Arts is a proven medium for helping youth develop SEL skills, with clear documented research on the intersection of arts education and competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making.
- **Uplift Nonprofits in Equity Initiatives:** When uplifting the call to engage Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also uplift nonprofits, many of whom are historically founded and/or led by individuals of color but are unable to earn M/WBE status.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of these recommendations. Investing in arts education is an investment in our future, and a crucial component of a comprehensive afterschool expansion strategy.

Maira Duarte Quiroga

**From:** [Whitney Toussaint](#)  
**To:** [Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Whitney Thomas Toussaint Testimony - Committee of Children and Youth Meeting 9.18.2025  
**Date:** Thursday, September 18, 2025 4:14:07 PM

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[REDACTED]

Thank you, Chair Stevens, and members of the Committee. My name is Whitney Thomas Toussaint, and I currently serve as the Co-President of the Community Education Council of District 30 in western Queens. However, today, I'm speaking as a parent of two NYC Public School students in District 30. On July 22nd, Mayor Adams announced the inaugural schools listed in the rollout of Afterschool for All, and as we have all heard, this program was going to prioritize those in need. We just heard that in the testimony on how certain schools were selected, as a representative for a high-need district that serves large NYCHA populations that include Astoria Houses, Woodside Houses, Ravenswood Houses, and Queensbridge Houses (the largest public housing complex on the continent of North America). I was disappointed to see that no schools from District 30 were selected for the inaugural rollout in Queens. (District 28 and District 26 didn't have any schools chosen either.)

Meanwhile, six schools from District 24, four from District 27, one from District 25, and one from District 29 were included, with Economic Need Indexes ranging from 65% to 93%. I am not asking that the current awardees change, but that our schools be included or be made aware of the reasons why they were not selected. Because by comparison, PS 171Q and PS 76Q in District 30 both have ENIs of 93% and lost their after-school programs under the LEAPS restructuring, the very circumstances discussed here, and that this initiative was supposed to address.

In the Daily News, I said: "We have been knocking on doors, begging, asking for help... when Mayor Adams said this rollout would serve schools with the most need, I immediately thought of these two schools, and I was surprised when they weren't selected at all." At this hearing, it was said you all looked at LEAPS and what happened; however, these two schools were mentioned in a March 2025 OP-ED that directly mentioned how LEAPS restructuring defunded their afterschool provider, and they don't have funded programs anymore. This is an example of the state defunding programs, and PS 171 and PS 76 were lost in the shuffle for this inaugural rollout.

Commissioner Howard was quoted saying, "This is just the first phase — we will continue to target communities with the highest need and lack of existing programs." Press Secretary Altus said, "We consulted community organizations, schools, and families." Yet CEC 30 was never engaged, and for PS 171 and PS 76, there are currently no existing COMPASS options to serve them at all and the list that one of our parents who reached out was provided included two middle schools, a charter school, a community center and all were over 20 minutes away from PS 171 or PS 76 on public transportation. How could those be feasible options for small elementary school children or children with disabilities? (Both PS 171 and PS 76 have ASD (Horizon at 171 and NEST at 76) programs and are K-5 schools.)

On August 28th, I emailed Commissioner Howard and Ms. Altus directly, requesting the criteria, data, and engagement details; however, I have not received a response as of the time of my testimony. For me, this is not about politics. It is about fairness, equity, and ensuring that the children of District 30 are no longer neglected.

If Afterschool for All is truly about the highest need, then leaving out PS 171 and PS 76 — both at 93% Economic Need Indexes that also serve students with Autism, is indefensible.

So, in the spirit of transparency and collaboration, I am asking for:

1. The criteria and data used to determine the inaugural schools.
  2. How vulnerable schools like PS 171 and PS 76 were reviewed under those criteria.
  3. Which community groups, schools, and families were consulted in the decisions for the initial roll-out?
  4. Clear plans that outline how CECs and Community School District Superintendents will be allowed to interface with the newly announced Commission on Universal After-School.
- This is not about politics — it is about fairness, equity, and transparency.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Susan Hackell, Deputy Commissioner

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DYCD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms*

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Denise Williams, Deputy Commissioner

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DYCD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms*

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 01/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Daniel Gullen, Assistant Commissioner

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DYCD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessica Barthel, Assistant Commissioner

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DYCD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: [Redacted] Sharon Shaw

Address: [Redacted]

I represent: Heart Share

Address: 330 Jay Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 09/18/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: martha Soriano Jimenez

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Center for family life in Sunset park

Address: 443 39<sup>th</sup> Street Brooklyn, NY 11232

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 09/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hannah Allen

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Center for Family Life in Sunset Park

Address: 443 39<sup>th</sup> Street Brooklyn NY 11232

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kimberly Oben

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

LIC, NY 1109

I represent: NYC Arts in Education Roundtable

Address: 520 8<sup>th</sup> Ave, NY, NY 10018

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chelsea Baytemur

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: The Ymca of Greater NY

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nora Moran

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chelsea Baytemur

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Y

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Malaysha (May) DePierro

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Advocates for Children of NY

Address: 151 W 30th St 5th Fl NY, NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sarah Jonas

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Children's Aid

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Emily Inger

Address: 120 Eighth Ave 22nd Floor

I represent: Chess in the Schools

Address: Same

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. T.2025-3959 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 2025 September 18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William Jourdain

Address: 51-23 B, Queens Blvd, Woodside, NY, 11377

I represent: Woodside on The Move Inc.

Address: 51-23 B, Queens Blvd, Woodside, NY, 11377

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Annie Minguez

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Good Shepherd Services

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Faith Behum

Address: 130 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street NY, NY

I represent: UJA-Federation of NY

Address: 130 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street NY, NY



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Paula Magnus (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 147.5 Park Ave

I represent: Northside Center

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/25

Name: LARA LAI (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1 CENTRE ST 5th FL

I represent: NYC COMPTROLLER BRAD LANDER

Address: 1 CENTRE ST 5th FL

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/18/2025

Name: Karen Jolicœur (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: [REDACTED] 10034

I represent: Creative Art Works

Address: 100 W. 33rd St. #1026 10001