

Mayor Michael Bloomberg
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

As elementary, middle, and high school principals, we urge you to protect child care and after-school programs in the city budget. We are very concerned that your 2013 Executive Budget will cut child care and after-school programs for more than 47,000 children. This means that 47,000 fewer children will have services and resources that help ensure school success.

School success depends not only on what happens in the classroom, but on children's early development and their experiences every day after school. With increased emphasis on school standards and academic rigor, child care and after-school programs are critical. We applaud your efforts to improve the quality of these programs. However, we must increase, and certainly not decrease, access to these higher quality programs. Cutting child care and after-school programs would set back our schools and make it harder for us to help children achieve positive educational outcomes.

When children enter our schools, we can tell which students have participated in early learning programs and which have not. The research confirms what we see in our schools every day. Children who participate in early learning programs are better prepared for school and less likely to be retained a grade, be placed in special education classes, and drop out of school. Often, subsidized child care programs are the only opportunity that low-income working families have to provide their children with early learning programs. Serving thousands fewer children would widen the achievement gap that exists between low-income children and their more affluent peers. The magnitude of the cut would be equivalent to hundreds of classrooms of children starting school behind. It would force hundreds of teachers to spend time helping children catch up, instead of moving their entire classes forward.

We also know that children need a safe, educational setting to attend after the school bell rings. After-school programs give students positive, structured activities that improve their development, safety, and academic performance. However, under the proposed budget, thousands of children would lose access to after-school programs. This cut would shut down nearly half of the elementary and middle school Out-of-School Time (OST) programs in New York City. We are concerned about where these children would go at the end of the school day and fear that they will be left with unsafe alternatives that will detract from their education.

Cutting children from early childhood and after-school programs would move our schools in the wrong direction. **Elementary, middle, and high school principals stand with the Campaign for Children and are counting on you to restore at least \$170 million for child care and after-school programs.**

Respectfully,

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