



## **Campaign for Children Statement on Schools Closing**

NEW YORK – November 18, 2020 – In response to the news of public schools going fully remote amid a second wave of COVID infections, the Campaign for Children released the following statement:

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are a lifeline to children and their families during these times of crises, and closing schools without considering the services they provide threatens the entire educational system, its wraparound programs including afterschool and early care, and children’s overall well-being.

Prior to today’s announcement, CBOs were excluded from all contingency planning despite repeated requests to engage in a collaborative process concerning their programs and services. The City has refused to acknowledge that CBOs require significant financial support and technical assistance in order to responsibly and safely care for the thousands of children who would be directed to their facilities for support.

While schools are closing, the Learning Bridges sites, run by CBOs, will remain open in order to provide child care for the children of essential workers and other families determined by the City to need care. However, the City’s lack of planning for this scenario did not consider that Learning Bridges do not have the capacity to serve the volume of children identified as eligible for the program by the City, and now require additional staff, expedited staff clearances, more space, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and secure funding.

Contrary to their peers in schools, CBOs staffing child care, 3K and pre-kindergarten programs, and Learning Bridges sites remain open to offer in-person critical services to families including school enrichment programs, academic help, arts and crafts, health and mental health services, and food provisions. Further exacerbating this disparity is that these programs are already constrained by dramatic budget cuts to CBOs which negatively impact their ability to service communities during this crisis.

The Campaign for Children calls on the Mayor and administration to address the needs of CBOs during this period of closures, and to include them in all planning or development of a transition to either full-remote or in-person services for New York’s children. The collateral damage from insufficient support and the City’s lack of inclusion of CBOs cannot be overstated. NYC’s children, families, and the CBOs that serve them deserve better.