



Campaign for Children Statement on the FY22 Preliminary Budget

NEW YORK – January 25, 2021 – Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the economic devastation it has wrought, New York’s children and families deserve a budget that puts their needs first in order to begin the long road towards recovery. The Campaign for Children is cautiously optimistic with the full restoration to the Summer Youth Employment program in the Mayor’s preliminary budget and the prospect that the expansion of 3K For All will continue. We hope that once the City receives the announced FEMA funding the FY2022 Executive Budget will accurately reflect these commitments.

However, children and youth who are struggling with the massive disruption to education due to the pandemic need more. Instead of investing in summer programming, which has been shown to combat learning loss, promote healthy development, and bridge achievement gaps that our youth are facing, the Mayor has proposed the total elimination of SONYC summer programming for middle school students, by cutting what was baselined in the budget and failing to fund seats lost in last year’s budget. It is deeply concerning to see supports for middle schoolers eliminated when there are concerns about keeping this age group engaged and not left behind. Additionally, summer programs are critical services that support parent participation and reentry in the work force. The Campaign for Children was also disappointed to see that approximately \$30 million in early childhood initiatives for child care vouchers, programs, and young child literacy, all included in last year’s budget, were not baselined in the Preliminary Budget.

As vaccination distribution scales up and the experts continue to study of how to safely vaccinate 0 to 16 years old, social distancing will be our reality through 2022. Therefore, as a means to combatting further COVID learning loss, the City must invest in extending their innovative Learning Bridges/Learning Lab program through the summer and the 2021-2022 school year. As the City recovers and builds-back, families will need summer childcare opportunities. In doing this extension of service, the City should open access to Learning Labs to all public school and charter students and provided community-based partners with nurses.

The Campaign looks forward to working with the administration and City Council to restore all the SONYC summer seats, expansion of Learning Bridges/Learning Labs and expansion of 3K For All in the FY2022 Executive Budget, and fully fund the entire community-based educational continuum, including early care, afterschool, and summer programs that are crucial to a successful recovery.\

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About the Campaign for Children

The Campaign for Children is a coalition of 150 early childhood education and after-school advocacy and provider organizations, including Citizens’ Committee for Children, Children’s Aid, United Neighborhood Houses, Good Shepherd Services, FPWA, the Day Care Council of New York, UJA-Federation of New York, and the YMCA of Greater New York. The Campaign’s successful advocacy saved child care and after-school programs for more than 47,000 children by securing more than \$120 million of one-year City Council discretionary funds for two consecutive years, which then were successfully baselined. The Campaign also advocated for the expansion of Universal Pre-K and middle school after-school programs in NYC and saved summer programs for over 34,000 children.