



June 21, 2021

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor of the City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Commissioner Bill Chong
New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
123 William Street
New York, NY 10038

Chancellor Meisha Ross Porter
New York City Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Director Jacques Jiha
New York City Office of Management and Budget
255 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10007

Speaker Corey Johnson
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Support Needed for Summer Rising Programs

Dear Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Chong, Chancellor Porter, Director Jiha, and Speaker Johnson,

We write today as youth serving providers, advocates, and community-based organizations to call on the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Department of Education (DOE) to immediately address underfunding in the new Summer Rising program. Without increased rates, CBOs will be severely limited in their capacity to run existing Summer Rising sites and will continue to decline Summer Rising expansion sites.

In Spring 2021, the City announced plans to run the new Summer Rising program in Summer 2021, calling it “an end to summer school as we know it.” We agree that young people need strong academic, recreational, and social-emotional supports this summer to help prepare them for a successful school year in the fall.

However, despite the new program design and significantly increased reach of the program, DYCD announced on June 10 that CBOs would only be given a 3% increase on their contracted funding levels, which comes out to a total of an extra \$32 per elementary student and \$18 per middle school student (based on a program of 100 students). This increase is wholly insufficient and does not even begin to

address increased expenses that will be necessary this summer. Insufficient funding sets CBOs up to fail at their responsibilities in a Summer Rising partnership.

Due to COVID-19, there are many new expenses that CBOs will incur this summer in order to offer a program that is enriching and supportive while also meeting the required health and safety standards. CBOs will need to recruit and hire additional staff to serve the expanded number of youth that the City expects to participate in Summer Rising, ensure those staff have the proper background checks in place, purchase supplies, and recruit youth to participate. Furthermore, current mandated staffing ratios are lower than before due to COVID-19, requiring CBOs to hire more staff than in previous summers. It is also crucial that these staff be compensated fairly and beyond a minimum wage in recognition of the hard work that goes into running summer programming.

For Summer Rising to succeed, CBOs must have the resources to recruit and train staff to get programs up and running in less than a month. **Summer rates must be increased across COMPASS, SONYC, and Beacon contracts to \$1700 per youth for elementary programs and \$925 per youth for middle school programs.**

CBOs will not be able to run existing Summer Rising sites or expand to new sites without increased funding. If there is a commitment to a full recovery for New York City post-pandemic, then there must be a substantial increase to the city's financial commitment to safe, quality summer programming. This is a pivotal time for New York's children and families, and we stand ready to work with you to strengthen the City's Summer Rising program.

For the sake of our children, we can't afford to get this wrong.

Sincerely,

82nd Street Academics
Broadway Housing Communities
Bronx House
Brooklyn Community Services
CAMBA
Center for Family Life in Sunset Park
Children's Aid
Chinese-American Planning Council
Citizens' Committee for Children of NY
Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation
Doris Group Family Day Care
East Side House Settlement
ExpandED Schools
FPWA
Grand Street Settlement
Goddard Riverside
Good Shepherd Services
Hamilton-Madison House
HANAC Inc.
Henry Street Settlement
Hudson Guild

Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement
KCS Korean Community Services
Kingsbridge Heights Community Center
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
Mosholu Montefiore Community Center
New Settlement
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation
NYCID
Queens Community House
RiseBoro Community Partnership
Sheltering Arms
Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Centers, Inc.
St Nicks Alliance
Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center
Sunnyside Community Services, Inc.
UJA Federation of NY
United Neighborhood Houses
Union Settlement
United Way of New York City
University Settlement
WHEDco
YMCA of Greater New York

Cc: Dean Fuleihan, First Deputy Mayor
J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives
New York City Council