

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact

Kelly Sturgis, Executive Director

AfterSchool Works! NY: the New York State Afterschool Network

[W]: 518-694-0660

[C]: 518-545-7955

kelly@afterschoolworksny.org

Assembly Proposes \$7 Million Increase for Advantage After School, \$75 Million For Expanded Child Care Subsidies, and \$200 Million for Community Schools Aid

Assembly One-House Budget Bill Shows Leadership in Promoting State Investments to Support New York Families

The Assembly's FY 16-17 one-house budget bill proposes \$87 million to support afterschool and child care for working families across the state. The bill includes an additional \$7 million to support Advantage After School programs and \$75 million to expand child care subsidies, while increasing the Community Schools Aid to \$200 million. AfterSchool Works! NY: the New York State Afterschool Network (ASW:NYSAN) thanks Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Children and Families Committee Chair Donna Lupardo, and Education Chair Catherine Nolan for their leadership in providing needed funding for programs that support New York's children and families.

The proposed \$7 million addition to the Advantage After School Program, over last year's budget, is a much needed and long overdue investment. The \$7 million addition would increase the total funding level for Advantage After School to \$24.3 million for FY16-17, which is \$5 million below pre-recession levels. This investment is a welcomed addition and a considerable step towards addressing the 1.1 million children still in need of afterschool programs statewide, according to the *America After 3pm* 2014 survey by Afterschool Alliance. This investment would be the largest state increase to afterschool funding since the recession.

Under the Assembly's proposal, \$75 million would also be allocated towards new child care subsidies, serving an additional 10,000 families with a focus on prioritizing homeless families. One-third of child care subsidies are used to support school-age children, including those in afterschool and summer programs, and ASW:NYSAN fully supports this investment.

Finally, ASW:NYSAN would like to thank the Assembly for their addition of \$100 million toward Community Schools Aid, raising the total investment to \$200 million for school districts to support the transformation of struggling and persistently struggling schools to community schools. Ninety percent of community schools incorporate afterschool or expanded learning time, and the strategy prioritizes school-community partnerships to meet the needs of students and families. While this proposed investment is crucial in supporting school districts in their efforts to convert to the community schools strategy, there is no funding included to renew the Community Schools Grant Initiative (CSGI). 30 of the 62 CSGI recipients are currently in their final year of this grant, and without a state investment in CSGI this year to allow for a new round of grants, many schools will face immense pressure next year as the resources provided to their school districts though the

Community Schools Aid will not be enough to sustain the services they have implemented over the previous three years. We call on the Assembly, Senate, and Governor to further demonstrate their commitment to community schools by restoring funding for the Community Schools Grant Initiative in the final State Budget.

Kelly Sturgis, Executive Director, ASW:NYSAN, says, "ASW:NYSAN would like to see all of New York State's youth and families have access to high-quality experiences beyond the traditional classroom. We would like to commend Speaker Heastie and the Assembly for their investments in the afterschool and summer programs that will help make this vision closer to a reality. We applaud their dedication to our youth and families, and hope the Senate will also invest in these priorities. "

Lucy Friedman, President, Expanded Schools, says, "Expanded Schools applauds the Assembly for its attention to youth and families. The proposed \$7 million increase in Advantage Afterschool will help meet the vast need throughout the state for programs that inspire and engage young people and help close the opportunity gap. We also strongly support the \$2.13 billion increase in education funding and support the \$100 million increase to community schools for struggling schools throughout the state."

Michelle Yanche, Associate Executive Director for Government and External Relations, Good Shepherd Services, says, "Good Shepherd Services applauds the Assembly's leadership in their efforts to ensure that New York provides access to quality afterschool programs for students across the state. As a provider of afterschool and summer programs in New York City, Good Shepherd Services understands the important role these programs have in supporting academic and social/emotional development of students outside of the school day. We fully support the Assembly's addition of \$7 million to the Advantage After School Program over last year's budget, and hope to see further investment in the final budget."

Kyle Stewart, Executive Director, Alliance of New York State YMCAs, says, "The Alliance of New York State YMCAs commends the Assembly in their support for New York State's children and families. The proposed \$7 million increase to the Advantage After School Program is essential to provide low-income students with quality afterschool programs that address the achievement gap. It is the Y's mission to help kids learn, grow and thrive and we achieve our goal by delivering afterschool programs through initiatives like the Advantage After School Program. This increased investment will help to expand our services and programs across New York State."

Kristen Kerr and Jenn O'Connor, Co-Chairs of Winning Beginning NY, say, "WBNY is pleased to see the Assembly's historic investment in child care subsidies. The prioritization of homeless children also satisfies one of the provisions of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which the coalition fully supports implementation of and appropriate funding for."

Jenn O'Connor, New York State Director, Council for a Strong America, says, "Council for a Strong America's members-- law enforcement, business, and retired military leaders-- see the value of high-quality afterschool and are thrilled by the Assembly's commitment to programs that will better prepare children and youth for success in school and in the workforce."

###

AfterSchool Works! NY: the New York State Afterschool Network (ASW:NYSAN) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the capacity and commitment of communities, programs, and professionals to increase access to high-quality programs and services beyond the traditional classroom. More information is available at www.nysan.org