

Statement- March 31

For further information contact:
NYS Network for Youth Success
(518)694-0660

**Statement from Kelly Sturgis, Executive Director of NYS Network for Youth Success:
Budget Funding for Afterschool Programs Essential to Coronavirus Response**

Families Depending on Advantage After School and Empire State After-School Programs to Keep Kids Safe and Learning When Parents Return to Workforce

Albany, NY – With New York’s FY 2020-21 State Budget due on April 1, Kelly Sturgis, Executive Director of the NYS Network for Youth Success, today released the following statement:

”As New York works to finalize the state budget, critical funds for afterschool programs must be increased so that children and families will be able to recover from lost work and school time. Afterschool programs will be essential to the recovery of the state’s economy and learning lost to the Coronavirus.

“Afterschool programs are essential to working families who need reliable childcare while parents are on the job. Many afterschool programs have already adapted their part-day programs to full-day programs to ensure that essential staff can work during this crisis. But some afterschool programs are facing tremendous uncertainty because of school closures. Staff layoffs have already begun due to limited funds. This lack of funding could lead to future staff shortages and the suspension of critical services.

“Afterschool programs must be able to pay and maintain staff, and ensure that programs are ready to operate at full capacity. Working parents will need afterschool and summer programs for their children in order to return to their jobs and fuel the state’s economic recovery.

“To merely maintain the number of students served in afterschool programs supported by last year’s budget, funding for the Advantage After School Program must be increased to \$38 million and the per-student rate must be raised to \$2,320. Costs have increased because of the impact of New York’s minimum wage increases on salaries, which make up the largest part of afterschool program budgets.

“Afterschool programs will be even more crucial for at-risk students who have missed out on learning and will need extra support and resources to catch up. Afterschool and summer learning programs will help mitigate significant learning loss due to school closures. Many students have already missed several weeks of school while districts struggle to reach students at home.

“We must invest in our students, their families and the recovery of our state’s economy by fully funding afterschool programs in this year’s budget.”

###

About The New York State Network for Youth Success

The New York State Network for Youth Success is dedicated to building a youth-serving system that increases the quality and availability of afterschool and expanded learning programs. The Network for Youth Success supports all programs that promote young people's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development outside the traditional school day. These programs include those that serve youth in kindergarten through 12th grade, take place in schools and/or in community-based settings, and occur before and after school, during weekends, holidays, and summer breaks, or during the school day through partnerships with community organizations.

The Network for Youth Success convenes partners and coordinates them around a common agenda focused on partnership development, policy development, and capacity building. The network connects practice with policy across a broad range of state, regional, and local partners that represent the afterschool, expanded learning, community schools, and youth development fields broadly.