

## TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARING ON 2020-2021 EXECUTIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Trudy Morgan Dadzie  
New York State Network for Youth Success  
[trudy@networkforyouthsuccess.org](mailto:trudy@networkforyouthsuccess.org) / 518-270-1275

Our thanks to Senator Krueger, Assemblymember Weinstein, Senator Mayer, and Assemblymember Benedetto, and to the other members of the Finance, Ways and Means, and Education Committees for the opportunity to present testimony to you today regarding the Executive Budget Proposal.

All of New York's students deserve the chance to reach their full potential. Afterschool, summer, community schools, extended learning time programs, and other expanded learning opportunities play a crucial role in supporting youth success for New York families and students. We are grateful that Governor Cuomo has proposed expanding the Empire State After-School Program by \$10 million in this year's Executive budget, and we support the continued investments in struggling schools through the \$300 million in Community Schools Aid included in the Executive Budget. However, these funding opportunities should be available to all students and schools that want them, and the funding provided is still short of meeting the need.

The 2014 *America After 3 PM* survey of parents and guardians found that an estimated 1.1 million New York students would attend an afterschool program if one were available.<sup>1</sup> The need for afterschool programs in New York far outweighs the availability. For every student enrolled in an afterschool program in our state, two more students who would participate simply lack access. In rural areas, this number increases to three children in need of a program for every one child enrolled.

### Empire State After-School Program

While the demand for afterschool and expanded learning programs remains high, we are pleased to see a clear recognition of the need to increase investments in these programs, and we request that the legislature **support the \$10 million proposal to increase the Empire State After-School Program in the Executive Budget. Also, amend the Executive Budget language to stipulate an increase of the per student rate from \$1,600 to \$2,320 to account for the minimum wage increase.**

The Empire State After-School Program was funded at \$55 million in the FY19-20 state budget to bring high-quality afterschool and summer programs to the state's highest need areas, including communities with high rates of youth homelessness and those vulnerable to gang activity. Positive youth outcomes require consistent, long-term participation; therefore, this program must be continued and expanded this year. These programs are an important part of a comprehensive set of services to address the needs of high-poverty communities, and expanding the Empire State After-School Program would serve more students with vital expanded learning opportunities that can help working families, support academic and social and emotional development, and provide a safe place for students during the peak hours of juvenile crime.

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<sup>1</sup> Afterschool Alliance, "America After 3 PM," 2014, <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>.



As proposed by the Governor, these programs can provide high-quality enrichment and learning opportunities for homeless youth between the end of the school day and the time their parents finish work and can bring them to a shelter. They can also provide a supportive environment for youth and engage them in productive activities that build positive relationships, safe from gang activity. When juvenile crime peaks, high-quality afterschool programs fight crime across the United States. A recent national study, "From Risk to Opportunity: After-School Programs Keep Kids Safe When Juvenile Crime Peaks," found that as support for afterschool programs has increased, juvenile arrests have decreased by 70 percent since 2000. With the many dangers currently facing students, families, and communities, safe and productive activities cannot end at 3pm. These afterschool programs are a crucial component to ensure that all of New York's children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

### Potential Impact

The Empire State After-School Program provides a number of positive benefits to students that support their success. The body of research on high-quality afterschool and summer programs shows clear evidence that high-quality programs have significant effects.<sup>2</sup> Regular attendance at a high-quality afterschool program over several years can close the achievement gap in math for low-income students.<sup>3</sup> High-quality summer programs can help students improve their math achievement by the equivalent of 17-21% of what they would normally learn in a year.<sup>4</sup> Program participation also increases engagement in school-day learning, resulting in higher attendance rates, a decrease in behavioral issues, and an increased motivation to learn.<sup>5</sup>

Afterschool and summer programs support the development of critical thinking and social skills needed for long-term success in the workplace and in life. Afterschool programs typically include inquiry-based, applied learning that allows youth to take on worthwhile long-term goals and emphasizes collaboration, investigation, and problem-solving.

Researchers are also finding that the challenges of achieving the American Dream are partially due to the opportunity gap. ExpandedED Schools estimates that gap is 6,000 hours before children even leave elementary school.<sup>6</sup> Children from well-off families play sports, learn an instrument, travel to museums and colleges, explore hobbies, and volunteer. Through these types of experiences, children become more likely to be engaged in learning because they can connect it to a real-world situation and an opportunity for their future. These experiences often make children from well-off families stronger candidates for colleges and employers—think of all the spaces on college applications for students to

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<sup>2</sup> New York State Network for Youth Success, "Top 10 Reasons You Should Support Expanded Learning Opportunities," 2014, <http://networkforyouthsuccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/top-10-reasons-draft-5.6.16.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Deborah Lowe Vandell, "The Achievement Gap is Real," *Expanded Learning.org*, February 2013, <http://www.expandinglearning.org/docs/The%20Achievement%20Gap%20is%20Real.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Wallace Foundation, "Building Our Understanding of Summer Learning," 2014, <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Knowledge-in-Brief-Building-Our-Understanding-of-Summer-Learning.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph A. Durlak & Roger P. Weissberg, "A Compendium on Expanded Learning: Afterschool Programs that Follow Evidence-Based Practices to Promote Social and Emotional Development are Effective.," *Expanded Learning.org*, 2013, [http://www.expandinglearning.org/docs/Durlak&Weissberg\\_Final.pdf%20](http://www.expandinglearning.org/docs/Durlak&Weissberg_Final.pdf%20)

<sup>6</sup> "The 6,000-Hour Learning Gap," *ExpandedED Schools*, 2013, <http://expandedschools.org/policy-documents/6000-hour-learning-gap#sthash.DhamOIOW.dpbs>



present themselves as having interests and experiences outside of school. All our children need such enrichment activities, and afterschool programs are an effective way to close the opportunity gap.

To build an innovation-focused economy, ensure our children are graduating high school ready for college and career, and keep them on track for healthy adult lives, New York needs to increase investment in high-quality afterschool and summer learning experiences. These programs help all of our students, no matter where they live, engage in hands-on learning, avoid risky behaviors and involvement with the juvenile justice system, and stay on track to develop into active citizens, and effective employees and entrepreneurs. They can be crucial for working families, who need to know that their children are safe between the end of the school day and the end of the work day. These programs may stand alone, or they may be integrated into a community schools' strategy that incorporates afterschool or expanded learning time.

### Community Schools

We are pleased to see the Executive Budget maintains \$250 million in Community Schools Aid included in last year's budget and provides an additional \$50 million to expand funding this year. We ask the State to **maintain \$250 million in existing community school funding, support the additional \$50 million in Community Schools Aid, and add an additional \$100 million in a new Community Schools Categorical Aid to adequately fund and sustain community schools statewide.** These new funds will allow school districts to develop quality community schools, to strengthen and enhance their work, and to sustain successful community schools. The community schools strategy has been shown to be effective for increasing student achievement in New York.<sup>7</sup>

We also ask for the State to **increase the \$1.2 million investment in Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers (TACs) by \$650,000 for a total appropriation of \$1.85 million annually through 2023.** School districts and community partners must receive the necessary support and implementation assistance to ensure their efforts are successful. An additional \$650,000 would provide funding for each of the three TACs to hire a dedicated staff member and enhance existing capacity for on-site technical assistance and coaching. This will also allow for an annual "statewide" convening for community school directors or district representatives. Providing principals, superintendents, and district administrators with vital on-site technical assistance and capacity building support will be more effective and efficient in ensuring schools and school districts are successful in their community school efforts. Further, an annual statewide convening will provide networking opportunities and valuable resource sharing. Finally, increased funding will allow for the creation of an 8.5% set-aside for Department administration to increase staff capacity and support.

### Need for Expanded Learning Opportunities

As previously outlined, the state currently has fewer high-quality afterschool and summer programs than are needed, depriving over a million students of support for their intellectual, social, and emotional development and their families of safe, affordable places for their children to continue learning until the work day ends. During the summer months, 500,000 New York children are still in need of access to high-quality summer programs. The lack of funding for afterschool and summer programs puts an

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<sup>7</sup> "Community Schools Research Brief 09," *Coalition for Community Schools*, 2009,  
<http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CCS%20Research%20Report2009.pdf>



additional burden on schools to meet students' needs without additional learning time or community support.

The 2014 *America After 3 PM* survey of parents and guardians found that an estimated 1.1 million New York students would attend an afterschool program if one were available.<sup>8</sup> This is the same number as when the *America After 3 PM* survey was conducted in 2009.<sup>9</sup> In 2009, New York was ranked third in the nation on a combined score for afterschool availability and quality. In 2014, New York did not even make the Top Ten.

Even while students and families suffer without access to programs, providers have the current capacity to increase the number of high-quality afterschool and summer programs dramatically, were the funding available. Recent grant competitions reveal that the demand for funding dramatically outweighs what is currently available in the state budget. In the 2012 competition for the Advantage After School program, \$6.8 million was awarded to programs. The total funding requested by all applications that met the minimum criteria to run a safe, beneficial program was \$54.4 million, \$48 million of which went unfunded. In 2014, the amount of unfunded, but qualified, applications totaled over \$31 million for only \$10.9 million in available funding. In 2013, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) conducted a grant competition for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program (federal funding administered by NYSED) to fund afterschool and summer programs. An additional \$122 million would be needed to fund all applications that met the minimum criteria to run a safe, beneficial program.

#### *Innovative Practices in New York's Afterschool and Summer Programs*

- *Off The Street*, an Advantage After School program at Hamilton Elementary School in Mt. Vernon, employs local teens from Thornton High School and provides them with the opportunity to give back to their community by mentoring the younger children.
- The 21st Century Community Learning Center/Extended School Day program at Thomas R. Proctor High School in Utica hosts an annual blanket drive that collects over 2,200 blankets, which are distributed to all 12 Utica City District Schools, local hospitals, and the humane society.
- The Advantage After School Program at Boys & Girls Harbor in East Harlem, an arts focused afterschool program, performed the hit song, "Rise Up" with Andra Day on the Billboard Women in Music 2016 Awards and at Colin and Alma Powell's America's Promise National Summit 2017.
- The Comet Design Co. in Carthage is an entrepreneurial program for high school students where participants write a business plan, utilize 3D printers and other high-tech devices to create real products, and then sell the products to support the afterschool program.
- The Children's Aid Society in New York City has been providing youth from high-need neighborhoods the opportunity to intern in the offices of their elected officials, giving these youth the chance to gain valuable experience in a public service.
- The Boys and Girls Club of Massena, a community facing heroin and prescription drug addiction among youth, is working with the local police department to provide a positive alternative for youth, through a program that provides a safe, educational place after school.

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<sup>8</sup> Afterschool Alliance, "America After 3 PM".

<sup>9</sup> Afterschool Alliance(2), "America After 3 PM," 2009, <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/AA3PM-2009.cfm>



- The Garden of Fire is a summer program held in Steuben County for at-risk youth that offers campers the opportunity to participate in art activities, learn to drum, and receive counseling, concluding with a glass blowing demonstration linked to one of the region's major industries.

#### Community Schools Initiatives

- The Genesee Valley Central School District (GVCSD) provides free breakfast, lunch, and snack to all students regardless of income, and send additional food home through a weekend Backpack program. By partnering with local organizations, the District is also able to provide produce from local farms. Also, a telehealth has been made available for mental health care, where a consultation occurs privately in the school where the student, parent, and doctor can collaborate to form a treatment plan. Comprehensive services may include psychiatry, medication management, and therapy.
- The Food Bank for NYC, funded by the New York City Council, created 16 new school pantries in NYC schools across the five boroughs to serve the growing population. Currently, 13 of the 16 pantries are part of the DOE's Community Schools Initiative, serving more than 3,200 individuals.
- The Broome County Promise Zone, a county wide effort led by Binghamton University and Broome County, has seen dramatic increases to the number of families engaged in the school system, growing from 100 families in 2014-15 to 642 in 2016-17. These efforts have also resulted in increased academic outcomes among students, as 32% increased their English grades and 46% increased math grades.
- Windsor Promise Zone located in Broome County partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Educator to educate elementary students on healthy food choices and to teach basic cooking skills and recipes for the students to prepare at home with their families.
- Action NYC adapted legal services for 27 Community Schools with 70 legal clinics for students, parents, and staff in New York City. Nearly 900 students and family members have been screened; about 30% of individuals screened may be eligible to apply for immigration benefits. The most common forms of relief seen in the schools are Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (for abandoned, abused, or neglected children), naturalization, asylum (and similar humanitarian claims including withholding of removal and claims under the Convention Against Torture), and family-based visa petitions.
- The Raising Educational Achievement Coalition of Harlem (REACH) program sponsored by Teachers College at PS 36 partnered with Children's Health Fund to provide vision screenings to all students. Approximately 21% were found in need of follow-up care and were provided with additional examinations and two pairs of glasses as needed.
- Wellsville Central School District and Auburn School District have both implemented mobile dental clinics that provide dental services to students and families.
- The New York City Community Learning Schools Initiative at PS 83 includes an afterschool program for English language learner (ELL) students and their families to give students and families the opportunity to learn English and American cultural traditions in a risk-free setting.

We hope that the Legislature and the Governor will take this opportunity to not just meet the immediate need, but to also **create a plan for future investments that will work towards serving the estimated 1.1 million children who need an afterschool program and do not have access** so the benefits of afterschool and summer programs can be made available to all of New York's youth who need them.



### Regulated Adult Use Marijuana Revenue

Afterschool programs enhance social-emotional development by focusing on responsible decision-making and self-management. They also strengthen Protective Factors—those characteristics that build resiliency and help kids cope with whatever is happening at home, at school, and in their neighborhoods.

In Alaska, which recently allocated 12.5% of revenue from the legalization of recreational marijuana to afterschool, data shows that youth who participated in programs just twice a week were 40% less likely to use marijuana. As New York considers the legalization of adult use marijuana in the state, **we request that the State invest 25% of any revenue secured through the legalization of adult use marijuana in afterschool programs.**

In New York State, if we regulate adult use of marijuana, we can still keep children and youth safe, educate them on responsible choices, and provide them with the relationships that will help support them to success.

We know that drug use among youth increases in the unsupervised afterschool hours. According to the RAND Corporation, “The likelihood of youth exposure to drug use and other criminal behavior increases dramatically in the hours after school ends.”<sup>10</sup> The National Crime and Prevention Council provides that “Latchkey children are particularly vulnerable to alcohol or other drug use because they are unsupervised by their parents or other responsible adults before and after school.”<sup>11</sup> This is confirmed by research and student surveys. One study found that being unsupervised after school doubles the risk that an eighth grader will smoke, drink, or abuse drugs.<sup>12</sup> A YMCA survey found that teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs.<sup>13</sup>

Research shows that afterschool program participation decreases drug use. The Rand Corporation found that the availability of quality afterschool activities can reduce participation in, and victimization as a result of, illicit activities and boost academic performance.<sup>14</sup> For example, a study of Boys & Girls Clubs found that housing projects without clubs had 30% more drug activity than those with new clubs.<sup>15</sup> Another study of afterschool programs focused on positive youth development found that program participants exhibited significantly lower increases in alcohol, marijuana, other drug use, and any drug use one year after beginning the program, compared to a control group.<sup>16</sup> And a meta-analysis reviewing dozens of studies found that students who participated in high-quality afterschool

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<sup>10</sup> “Afterschool Programs,” Rand Corporation, accessed January 31, 2019, <http://www.rand.org/topics/after-school-programs.html>

<sup>11</sup> “Strategy- Before-and After-School Programs,” National Crime Prevention Council, accessed January 31, 2019, <http://archive.ncpc.org/topics/school-safety/strategies/strategy-before-and-after-school-programs.html>

<sup>12</sup> Denise C. Gottfredson et al., “Do After School Programs Reduce Delinquency?” *Prevention Science* 5, No. 4 (2004), <https://ccjs.umd.edu/sites/ccjs.umd.edu/files/pubs/GottfredsonWeismanSoule.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Nels Ericson, “The YMCA’s Teen Action Agenda”, *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*, May 2001, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/fs200114.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> “Rand Corporation, “Afterschool Programs”

<sup>15</sup> Steven Paul Schinke et al., “Boys & Girls Clubs in Public Housing Developments: Prevention Services for Youth at Risk,” *Journal of Community Psychology*, *OSAP Special Issue* (1992).

<sup>16</sup> Jacob Kraemer Tebes et al. “Impact of a Positive Youth Development Program in Urban After-School Settings on the Prevention of Adolescent Substance Use,” *Journal of Adolescent Health* 41, Issue 3 (2007): 239–247, [https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(07\)00104-8/fulltext](https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(07)00104-8/fulltext)

### Capital Region

415 River Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Troy, NY 12180  
518-694-0660

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[www.NetworkForYouthSuccess.org](http://www.NetworkForYouthSuccess.org)



programs exhibited significant reductions in drug use and other problem behaviors.<sup>17</sup> Lowering the risk of substance abuse among at-risk youth can save an estimated \$840,000 to \$1.1 million that the average substance abuser imposes on society.<sup>18</sup>

Afterschool programs help prevent substance abuse by not only keeping kids supervised, but also building Protective Factors that make them less likely to use drugs. The more Protective Factors present in a young person's life, the more likely it is that they will engage in healthy behaviors. Afterschool programs reduce substance abuse through the development of protective or resiliency factors such as school connectedness, self-control, self-confidence, and quality peer relationships.<sup>19</sup> Protective Factors also include increasing academic skills and positive school behaviors; research on high-quality afterschool has been shown to improve school attendance and academic success.

We have discussed our revenue investment proposal with the Governor's Office and hope that you will support us as we move forward.

As New York seeks to ensure that all students graduate high school ready for college and career, it must invest in expanded learning programs. The New York State Network for Youth Success recommends that the Legislature:

- **Support Governor Cuomo's proposed \$10 million increase for the Empire State After-School Program, and amend the Executive Budget language to stipulate an increase of the per student rate from \$1,600 to \$2,320 to account for the minimum wage increase.**
- **Maintain \$250 million in existing community school funding, support the additional \$50 million in Community Schools Aid, and add an additional \$100 million in a new Community Schools Categorical Aid to adequately fund and sustain community schools statewide. Increase the \$1.2 million investment in Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers (TACs) by \$650,000 for a total of \$1.85 million.**
- **Invest 25% of any revenue secured through the legalization of adult use marijuana in afterschool programs.**

#### Additional Recommendations

*Maintain funding at \$24.3 million for the Extended School Day/School Violence Prevention Program.* Extended School Day/School Violence Prevention programs provide critical before school, afterschool, and summer programming to students across the state, and the continuation of these grants is necessary to the success of the programs and students.

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<sup>17</sup>Joseph A Durlak et al. "A Meta-Analysis of After-School Programs That Seek to Promote Personal and Social Skills in Children and Adolescents," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 45 (2010): 294–309, [http://www.flume.com.br/pdf/Durlak\\_A\\_meta-analysisof\\_after\\_school.pdf](http://www.flume.com.br/pdf/Durlak_A_meta-analysisof_after_school.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Mark A. Cohen and Alex R. Piquero, "New Evidence on The Monetary Value of Saving a High Risk Youth," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 25, Issue 1 (2009): 25-49.

<sup>19</sup> Gale M. Morrison et al. "The protective function of after-school programming and parent education and support for students at risk for substance abuse," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 23 (2000): 365-371, [http://www.viriya.net/jabref/the\\_protective\\_function\\_of\\_after-school\\_programming\\_and\\_parent\\_education\\_and\\_support\\_for\\_students\\_at\\_risk\\_for\\_substance\\_abuse.pdf](http://www.viriya.net/jabref/the_protective_function_of_after-school_programming_and_parent_education_and_support_for_students_at_risk_for_substance_abuse.pdf)



*Support \$21.59 million in funding proposed to extend current Extended Learning Time grants. The Extended Learning Time program began in School Year 2014-15 as an initiative of Governor Cuomo to lengthen to school day with supplemental programming and supports. Participating schools involve community partners to provide enrichment activities and additional learning time to students throughout the extended school day, supporting their academic and social and emotional development. Maintaining funding will allow current grantees to continue providing additional learning time to students.*