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NYS Budget Fails to Allocate Federal Funds to Directly Support Afterschool State Diverts Critical Funding from the American Rescue Plan Intended to Strengthen Afterschool Infrastructure

ALBANY, NY (April 9, 2021)—The NYS Network for Youth Success expressed grave concern about **New York State’s failure to properly allocate \$629 million of federal American Rescue Plan** funding intended to **support afterschool**, summer, and other programs to **mitigate learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic**.

The American Rescue Plan provided \$2.2 billion to New York State to address learning loss through afterschool, summer, and other expanded learning opportunities, with \$629 million earmarked for state level efforts funded through the NYS Department of Education and \$1.6 billion for local school districts. But the recently approved New York State Budget allocates the entire \$2.2 billion to local school districts, leaving no dedicated resources for youth-serving community partners. This puts school districts in the difficult position of determining how to distribute funding intended for the Education Department to support afterschool and summer enrichment programs while meeting their own extensive needs.

In anticipation of the federal funding, afterschool providers have been preparing efforts to adapt and expand programs to help children catch up on lost learning as COVID restrictions are relaxed and more parents are returning to on-site work. More specific guidance from the federal government regarding American Rescue Plan funding is anticipated soon. But despite extensive efforts by the expanded learning community, New York State failed to incorporate the input of providers, partners, or federal plans in determining the state budget funding allocation.

“How these critical funds are allocated in the state budget puts children, families, afterschool providers and school districts in an untenable position,” said Kelly Sturgis, Executive Director of the New York State Network for Youth Success. “While thousands of families await access to afterschool care, essential funding is even more precarious than before the state budget was approved. Afterschool programs are proven to help students catch up on lost learning and reduce the education gap. The lack of regard for the needs of families and the intent of the American Rescue Plan is inexcusable.”

Sturgis thanked New York State Legislators for restoring funding for the **Advantage After School Program** to last year’s levels. Advantage After School was allocated at \$33 million in the final FY 2021-22 New York State Budget. The Legislature’s crucial restoration of the \$5 million reduction proposed by Governor Cuomo will ensure continued afterschool programming for many children in underserved communities across the state. Advantage After School funds afterschool programs at a rate of \$2,000 per student, far short of the actual cost.

In a year when increased funding is essential to support low income New York families returning to the workforce, the State Budget maintains level funding for the **Empire State After-School Program** at \$55 million (a rate of \$1,600 per student). The budget also maintains \$250 million for **community schools** – the only state funding for these programs that support the whole child by providing afterschool, health care and other services – and have shown much promise in uplifting children and families in underserved communities. The budget also maintains

allocations of \$1.2 million for community schools **technical assistance centers** and \$250,000 for **mental health grants** for community schools.

"The Network for Youth Success stands at the ready to help school districts across New York State connect with community organizations and local youth development experts who can help design and implement strong afterschool and summer programs that stem learning loss," said Jen Siaca Curry, Vice President of the Board of the NYS Network for Youth Success and CEO of Change Impact.

Afterschool programs provide safe, affordable afterschool opportunities that benefit students, families, employers and New York State's economy. Participants receive supervised academic and developmental support during the time when school has ended but most parents are still working - the peak hours of juvenile crime. Afterschool programs help children, families and communities succeed, and have been shown to reduce the achievement gap between high and low-income students.

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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.

More information about the New York State Network for Youth Success is available at <https://networkforyouthsuccess.org/>