



CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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Hon. Marquis A. Harrison
Chairperson
Minah Whyte
District Manager

September 13, 2024

Mayor Eric Adams
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Councilmember Yusef Salaam
250 Broadway, Suite 1776
New York, NY 10007

Speaker Adrienne Adams
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine
1 Centre Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Honorable City Elected Officials,

I am writing on behalf of Manhattan Community Board 10 to urgently bring your attention to a crisis facing hundreds of families in Central Harlem. As the new school year begins, many families will find that the afterschool programs their children depend on are no longer available.

Afterschool programs offer vital benefits, including academic support, enhanced social skills, and safe, supervised environments for children. Despite their importance, these programs have been cut from many traditional public schools in our community due to changes in the State's funding formula. The Office of Children and Family Services has consolidated several funding sources into a single Leap Program, requiring providers to reapply. As a result, many non-profit organizations that previously ran these programs did not secure funding.

This funding crisis has left families and schools scrambling for safe afterschool options. However, we believe that the issue extends beyond funding alone. A lack of coordination between New York State and New York City has exacerbated the problem, leaving children and families in our community without essential resources.

New York City's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) has not issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for afterschool programs in years, and there are no signs that they will do so soon. Additionally, the Department of Education, a key player in this crisis, has yet to respond or propose solutions.

We urge you to advocate for the formation of a joint task force, composed of representatives from both New York State and New York City agencies. This task force should examine the coordination gaps between state and city efforts and develop a comprehensive plan to address the immediate and long-term need for afterschool programs in communities like ours. Furthermore, we ask that the task force explore innovative solutions such as public-private partnerships to ensure sustainable support for afterschool services.

The stakes are simply too high to delay action. Without these programs, the safety and well-being of our children are at risk. Afterschool programs provide supervised environments that protect children from dangerous influences such as gang involvement, substance abuse, and other risky behaviors. They also alleviate the burden on older siblings and working parents, who otherwise may have to leave their children unattended or miss work, risking charges of neglect or abuse.

We implore you to act now. The families of Central Harlem need your support to restore these critical afterschool services that are essential for the development and safety of our children and the well-being of our working families.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your prompt response and commitment to addressing this crisis.

Sincerely,



Marquis Harrison
Board Chairperson
Manhattan Community Board 10



Stephanie Palmer
Education, Youth & Libraries Committee Chair
Manhattan Community Board 10

Cc:

Hon. Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York State
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Majority Leader of the New York State Senate
Hon. Carl Heastie, Speaker of the New York State Assembly
Hon. Cordell Cleare, New York State Senator, 30th Senate District
Hon. Inez E. Dickens, New York State Assembly Member, 70th Assembly District
Hon. Alfred E. Taylor, New York State Assembly Member, 71st Assembly District