



CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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Hon. Marquis A. Harrison
Chairperson
Minah Whyte
District Manager

September 13, 2024

Governor Kathy Hochul
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Senator Cordell Cleare, 30th Senate District
Legislative Office Building, Room 905
Albany, NY 12248

Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
NYS Capitol Building, Rm. 330
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblymember Inez E. Dickens, 70th A.D.
Legislative Office Building, Room 734
Albany, NY 12248

Speaker Carl Heastie
Legislative Office Building Suite 932
Albany, NY 12248

Assemblymember Alfred E. Taylor, 71st A.D.
Legislative Office Building, Room 602
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Honorable State 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. Eric Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
Hon. Adrienne Adams, Speaker of the New York City Council
Hon. Yusef Salaam, New York City Council Member, 9th Council District
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Keisha Sutton-James, Deputy Manhattan Borough President