



**Department of
Homeless Services**

Department of
Social Services

Steven Banks
Commissioner

June 13, 2018,

Joslyn Carter
DHS Administrator

Dear Community Board 4 and the Arts, Culture, Education & Street Life Committee (ACES),

Thank you for your letter dated May 8, 2018 regarding laundry access for students in temporary housing who are residing in commercial hotel locations.

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Giving families and children an opportunity to succeed is our top priority in New York City—and for families facing homelessness, that means preserving as much stability as possible by ensuring access to high-quality childcare and educational opportunities during challenging times. Over the past four decades, the shelter system has been built up in a haphazard way without a guiding principle—but our plan for addressing the citywide challenge of homelessness establishes community as its guiding principle, offering homeless New Yorkers, including the nearly 70 percent of our clients who are families with children, the opportunity to be sheltered closer to the essential anchors of life, like schools, and communities they used to call home in order to stabilize their lives. We continue to transform the shelter system by: committing to phasing out commercial hotel facilities once and for all citywide; making unprecedented investments in repairs, renovations, and our not-for-profit social service provider partners; and working collaboratively to enhance and deliver the services and supports our homeless neighbors deserve as they get back on their feet.

As a result of our conversations with Community Board 4 and as part of our effort to continually improve how we serve New Yorkers in need, we now offer “Laundry Days” at commercial hotel locations, in which social services staff facilitate opportunities for clients to do laundry at scheduled times. In addition, the Department of Homeless Services encouraged social service providers at commercial hotels to offer Life Skills workshops with a specific focus on laundry, such as connecting families to related resources, including offering free laundry detergent and a limited number of pre-paid laundry cards. DHS remains in close contact and coordination with P.S. 51, 33, and 111, including their respective principals, and we look forward to receiving the names of students who these educators believe are in need of additional support.

We appreciate our ongoing dialogue with CB4 as we work to ensure our neighbors experiencing homelessness can access the services and supports they deserve as they get back on their feet. Thank you for your dedication to supporting New Yorkers in need, and we look forward to continued collaboration on this important matter.

Thank you,

Joslyn Carter, DHS Administrator