Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Dawn Yuster, *Director, School Justice Project* • 212-822-9542/718-813-7389 • dyuster@afcnyc.org

Response to Release of NYC School Discipline Package

June 20, 2019 (NEW YORK CITY) — Today, Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to Mayor de Blasio's release of a school discipline package:

Today, the City is taking some very important steps to support the social and emotional needs of students and keep them in school. Day after day, we see the academic and emotional harm that suspended, handcuffed, and arrested students face – particularly Black and Latino students and students with disabilities, who are disproportionately impacted. Over the years, the length of a suspension has often been way out of proportion to what the student did wrong, with the result that students have missed 45, 90, or 180 days of school and had trouble catching up and readjusting when they returned. We are pleased to see the City take action to reduce overly long suspensions and limit school-based arrests, which should decrease the long-term costs to students and communities of punishing students by pushing them out of school.

For many years, Advocates for Children of New York has zealously advocated for all schools to have access to evidence-based approaches that keep students safe, supported, and learning in school, while they grow from their mistakes. By focusing more resources on supporting students directly through clinically trained mental health professionals in schools and Restorative Practices, the City is showing an increased commitment to keeping all students in school and learning.

About Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)

Since 1971, Advocates for Children of New York has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. AFC uses four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and compel needed reform.