



# Advocates for Children of New York

## Protecting every child's right to learn

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### News Release

#### For Immediate Release

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## Response to Release of NYC DOE Special Education Data

**November 1, 2017 (NEW YORK CITY)** — Today, Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the New York City Department of Education's annual report of information regarding students receiving special education services pursuant to Local Law 27:

In reviewing the data just released by the DOE and comparing it to data for the past two years, we are struck by how little has changed. We are still seeing unacceptably low percentages of students receiving timely special education evaluations and IEP meetings—essentially the same as in prior years.

We are heartened to see that the percentage of students fully receiving special education services increased from 59 percent last year to 73 percent this year. However, the fact remains that over 25 percent of students with disabilities—nearly 50,000 students—are still going without all of the special education services they are entitled to receive under law.

At a time when we see significant numbers of students with disabilities in NYC unable to meet curricular expectations, it is not surprising that the data continues to show considerable delays and deficits in special education evaluations, IEP meetings, and delivery of services. For example, while every student should leave school being able to read, only 10 percent of students with disabilities in NYC demonstrated proficiency in English Language Arts on last year's third through eighth grade state exams. Unless and until the 193,361 students with disabilities in NYC schools receive the supports they require, those students will continue to lag behind their general education peers in critical academic areas.

The measure of a good school system is one that makes sure that all its students, including those with greater needs, receive the supports and services necessary for success. NYC has a lot of work to do.

#### **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.

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