



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Sarah Part, *Communications Associate* • 212-822-9517 • spart@afcnyc.org

AFC's Response to Proposed Increased Investment in School Accessibility

November 1, 2018 (NEW YORK CITY) — Today, Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the release of the New York City Department of Education's proposed FY 2020-2024 Five-Year Capital Plan:

We called for a major investment in school accessibility, and this Administration listened. The Mayor and Chancellor are proposing a substantial capital investment to make a third of schools in every district fully accessible to students, parents, and educators with physical disabilities over the next five years.

Nearly three decades since the passage of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, no student should be prevented from attending a school on account of accessibility concerns. But currently:

- » Only 18.4% of the City's schools are fully accessible
- » In 28 of the City's 32 school districts, less than one-third of schools are fully accessible.
- » In seven districts, fewer than 10% of schools are fully accessible.
- » Three districts have no fully accessible elementary schools; four districts have no fully accessible middle schools; and six districts have no fully accessible high schools.

We thank the City Council, especially Speaker Johnson, Finance Committee Chair Dromm, and Education Committee Chair Treyger, for shining a light on the need for more accessible schools and working with Mayor de Blasio to increase the investment in accessible schools in the budget adopted in June. We thank Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza for embracing the goal of making a third of schools in each district fully accessible and proposing the funding to make this goal a reality.

With fewer than 20% of NYC's public schools now fully accessible, this commitment will literally open doors to inclusion and integration for people who are too often excluded.

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.