



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Response to Increased Funding for School Social Workers

June 14, 2019 (NEW YORK CITY) — Today, Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the agreement announced between Mayor de Blasio and the New York City Council to fund 216 new school social workers:

By adding more than 200 school social workers, the City is taking an important step to focus urgently needed resources on the social-emotional needs of students. Too often, we see schools resort to classroom removals, school suspensions, arrests, handcuffing, or EMS transports, instead of providing students with the behavioral support they need to stay and succeed in school. The funding announced today will allow thousands of students to get necessary support in school from mental health professionals. We thank the Mayor and the City Council for their leadership on this important issue.

We are also pleased that the Council is committed to ensuring that at least 31 of the 216 new social workers are targeted toward schools with high numbers of students living in shelter, increasing the number of Bridging the Gap social workers to 100. Given the record numbers of students who are homeless, increasing the number of Bridging the Gap social workers is critical.

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.