



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn since 1971

Press Statement

For Immediate Release

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November 23, 2021 (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 Council's passage of Intro 150-A, creating a task force focused on the transportation of students in temporary housing:*

AFC thanks the New York City Council for today passing Intro 150-A, creating an interagency task force to assess and make recommendations for addressing the barriers to transportation experienced by students who are homeless. We are grateful to Council Member Stephen Levin, Chair of the Committee on General Welfare, for championing this legislation and getting it across the finish line.

School can be a critical source of stability for children who do not have permanent housing, but far too often, transportation challenges prevent school from playing this role. The City places more than 40% of families in a shelter in a different borough from their child's school, leading to long commutes, unnecessary school transfers, and frequent absences. Delays in arranging bus service are common, and as busing is only available at the end of the school day, students who require it are often unable to participate in after-school programs with their peers. For example, schools are offering certain special education services after school to students with disabilities this year, but the City has not yet agreed to provide bus service to students who rely on it because they live in a shelter far from school, jeopardizing the ability of many students who are homeless to receive needed services. Greater coordination across City agencies is sorely needed to address these barriers.

The tens of thousands of students who experience homelessness every year in New York City already face a multitude of obstacles to educational success; getting to school in the first place should not be one of them. We are eager for the task force to begin work and look forward to working with the incoming administration to implement its recommendations.

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.