



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



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Advocates Call on City to Increase Support for Rising Numbers of Students in Temporary Housing

March 15, 2018 (NEW YORK CITY) — Today, Advocates for Children of New York (AFC) and Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC) called on Mayor de Blasio to provide critical support to students who are homeless, releasing a publication entitled [Recommendations for Improving School Access and Success for Rising Numbers of Students in Temporary Housing](#). In addition, sixteen leading child advocacy, education, and housing organizations sent a [letter to Mayor de Blasio](#) urging him to include a significant infusion of resources in the budget to support these students.

In 2016-2017, a record 104,088 New York City students were identified as homeless—a 50 percent increase from just five years ago. For the past two years, the Administration included \$10.3 million in the budget to support students who are homeless, including funding for 43 Department of Education “Bridging the Gap” social workers to work with students living in shelters at schools with high populations of these students. These social workers have provided counseling to students, connected them to academic support and mental health services, and worked to improve attendance.

However, the Mayor's recent budget proposal did not include any funding to continue these initiatives. When asked about this omission, the Mayor stated that he was still determining what type of support to include for these students in the 2019 budget.

Given the number of students in temporary housing and the barriers they face to school success, the organizations are urging the Mayor to:

1. Establish a Deputy Chancellor's Office for Highly Mobile Students (including students in temporary housing and students in foster care)
2. Hire Field Support Center Directors for Highly Mobile Students
3. Increase the number of DOE Bridging the Gap school-based social workers for students in shelters from 43 social workers to 100
4. Hire 50 DOE social workers to provide intensive supports at shelters to address education-related issues

“With more than 100,000 students homeless, we have a crisis situation that demands high-level leadership from the Department of Education,” said Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children. “The Mayor’s goals of equity and excellence require bold action to help ensure that students who are homeless can get to school every day and receive the counseling and academic support they need to succeed.”

“The family homelessness crisis demands that City leaders take additional steps to better support homeless children both get to school and succeed in school,” said Jennifer March, Executive Director of Citizens’ Committee for Children. “This starts with restoring the funding currently supporting social workers, but must also include prioritizing the needs of homeless students and investing in additional supports to reduce absenteeism and help homeless students thrive.”

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.

About Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York (CCC)

Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York educates and mobilizes New Yorkers to make the city a better place for children. Since 1944, our advocacy has combined public policy research and data analysis with citizen action. We cast light on the issues, educate the public, engage allies, and identify and promote practical solutions to ensure that every New York City child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. For more information on CCC, visit our web site at www.cccnewyork.org. Stay up to date on the latest news and information regarding the well-being of New York City’s children by following us on Facebook and Twitter.