



THE COUNCIL  
OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

April 16, 2018

The Honorable Bill de Blasio  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

We are writing to urge you to include at least \$30.3 million in the FY 2019 budget to support students who are homeless.

In 2016-17, more than 100,000 New York City students were identified as homeless. Students who are homeless have worse educational outcomes than their peers. Outcomes are particularly bleak for students living in NYC shelters—38,000 students in 2016-2017. For example, during the 2015-2016 school year, 53% of students living in shelters were absent on 20 or more school days—missing the equivalent of *one month* of school, only 15% of third through eighth grade students living in shelters scored proficiently in reading, and 10% of middle and high school students living in shelters were suspended from school.

We commend you for including \$10.3 million in the FY 17 and FY 18 budgets to fund supports for students living in shelters, including 43 Department of Education “Bridging the Gap” social workers to work in schools with high populations of students living in shelters, after-school literacy programs at shelters, and workshops at shelters to help students with school applications.

However, while the number of students in temporary housing increased by 50 percent over the past five years, the only increase in targeted staffing was the addition of the 43 Bridging the Gap social workers. This is insufficient.

We had hoped that the FY 19 Preliminary Budget would build on this investment. Instead, we were disappointed to see that the FY 19 Preliminary Budget omits all funding for this initiative.

Our City must provide more support to students who are homeless, not less. Given the record levels of students who are homeless and the tremendous needs of these students, we urge you to restore the \$10.3 million included in the FY 17 and FY 18 budgets for supports for these students and add \$20 million for the following initiatives:

- 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 to 100 social workers at schools
- 4) Hire 50 DOE social workers to provide intensive supports at shelters to address education-related issues

Senior level DOE leadership and social workers are needed to drive system-wide change and help ensure that students who are homeless can attend school on a regular basis and get the academic and social-emotional support they need to succeed. We look forward to working with you to advance these recommendations.

Sincerely,



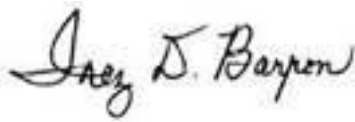
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Stephen Levin  
NYC Council Member, District 33  
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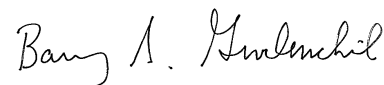
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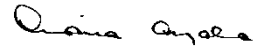
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