



**Citizens' Committee
for Children** of NEW YORK

For Immediate Release: June 30, 2021

Citizens' Committee for Children Responds to City Budget Agreement for Fiscal Year 2022

New York, NY --- Citizens' Committee for Children issued the following statement in response to the Budget Agreement announced today for City FY 2022:

Citizens' Committee for Children applauds the Administration and City Council on today's handshake on the FY22 New York City Budget, which will play an instrumental role in New York's recovery and our city's ability to address long-standing economic disparities and race-based injustices. This final \$98.7 billion budget agreement, reached between the de Blasio administration and of the City Council under Speaker Johnson's leadership, makes use of \$14 billion dollars in federal aid, sets aside \$2.8 billion in reserves and makes robust and targeted investments to address housing insecurity, hunger, educational inequity and learning loss, as well as expand access to behavioral health care and reduce community level violence. This budget agreement also invests in the human service sector with funding indirect rates, offering a one time bonus for the human service workforce, and by restoring Council initiative funding to 2020 levels; all of which offer much needed support to community-based providers and by extension the communities they serve.

Among numerous initiatives in the CFY'22 budget agreement, we are especially pleased that the agreement builds on the Mayor's Executive Budget by: enacting and funding legislation to increase the City FHEPS rental voucher; increasing investments in fresh food and community-based food pantries; funding shelter security workers at a prevailing wage; and baselining funding for the Fair Futures supports for children in foster care. We are also especially grateful that the budget agreement increases the per child rates for Summer Rising, resulting in a 30% increase for elementary school-aged programs and 10 percent for middle school programs. The rate increases will help providers offer more seats to children, staff up, and develop programming as Summer Rising is set to start in a matter of days.

The level of suffering and trauma New York City's children, families and communities have experienced requires not only rigorous monitoring of the implementation of budget commitments but ongoing assessment of decisions yet to be made on resource usage, as well as attention paid to the impact and outcomes achieved through budgeted initiatives. This information will be critical to understanding how successful the city is in addressing immediate needs and promoting recovery as well as identifying which investments must be sustained long term.

Examples of issues yet to be resolved of critical importance to children, families and communities include: determining how nearly \$7 billion in federal educational resources might be leveraged to address the needs of special populations of students including english language learners, children in foster care, and children who are homeless or in doubled up housing situations. Our city shelters are in desperate need of 150 community coordinators to not only

prepare homeless students for school reentry but to connect them to educational and social supports. Similarly over \$140 million in resources are dedicated to addressing heightened behavioral health needs in this budget and yet very little detail is available to illustrate how these resources might be leveraged to meet child and adolescent needs. There is a critical opportunity to invest in place-based preventive and clinical interventions in pediatric settings, child care, schools and communities as our children and adolescents are in crisis and their behavioral health needs have skyrocketed. Additionally, as the city moves forward with the expansion of 3-K and the finalization of the DOE's Covid-19 child care awards and new contracts for the Birth-to-Five center based system, there is a critical opportunity to expand access to full-day/year-round child care across all settings, and to ensure timely contract registrations and bridge loans are secured so that programs designed to start July 1, 2021 do not experience disruption in staffing or services. Finally, long term recognition and investment in the human service workforce is long overdue. Greater effort is needed to embed COLAS within human service contracts and progress on salary parity for early education teachers is needed for preschool special education teachers and center directors.

Looking ahead, we are eager to work with the current City Administration and City Council and the incoming 2022 Mayoral Administration and new City Council to ensure that the investments announced today and funding decisions still evolving, result in an equitable recovery and promote the well-being of New York's 1.7 million children and their families.

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About CCC

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC) educates and mobilizes New Yorkers to make the city a better place for children. CCC's advocacy combines public policy research and data analysis with citizen action. CCC casts light on the issues, educates the public, engages allies and identifies and promotes practical solutions to ensure that every New York City child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. For more information about CCC, visit www.cccnewyork.org.