

Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL)

Department of Education of the City of New York

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Resolution #17- In Support of NYC's Plan for UPK and Expanded After-school Programs

WHEREAS, a wealth of research shows pre-kindergarten ("PK") and after-school programs are key to improving graduation rates and reducing the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, these high-quality programs are proven to increase cognition, improve overall school performance and build fundamental skills that put children on an upward educational path; and

WHEREAS, children who receive early education are 20% more likely to graduate from high school and 20% more likely to rise out of poverty; and

WHEREAS, PK can reduce the achievement gap by up to 40%, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research; and

WHEREAS, without a high-quality early childhood intervention, an at-risk child is: 25% more likely to drop out of school, 50% more likely to be placed in special education and 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime, according to the Ounce of Prevention Fund; and

WHEREAS, according to the Afterschool Alliance, one in four New York City ("NYC") school children is left alone and unsupervised during after-school hours, the peak window for juvenile crime and violence; and

WHEREAS, research on high quality after-school programs has found that children who participate have improved attendance, behavior, coursework, and test scores; and

WHEREAS, under NYC's plan, all four-year olds would have access to universal PK ("UPK") for the first time in NYC's history; and

WHEREAS, implementation of this UPK plan would close a gap of 53,767 children, including English Language Learners, who currently receive inadequate part-time Pre-K, or no Pre-K at all and would serve more than 73,000 4-year olds at full implementation; and

WHEREAS, NYC's plan would also aggressively expand after-school learning opportunities for nearly 120,000 middle school students, including English Language Learners, by adding new programs between 3pm and 6pm in academics, culture, foreign languages and athletics; and

WHEREAS, middle school is a critical period when parents' involvement in education declines and kids need to be kept off the streets and out of harm's way; and

WHEREAS, after school can present an opportunity to provide classes for immigrant parents to learn English; and

~~??WHEREAS, NYC has proposed paying for these programs with a five year increase in the NYC income tax on earners over \$500,000 from 3.876% to 4.41%, which would yield approximately \$530 million in dedicated new revenue each year; and~~

WHEREAS, Albany has promised UPK since 1997, but funding commitments have not materialized and tens of thousands of NYC school children have been left behind; and

WHEREAS, NYC needs this plan fully funded with long-term dedicated funding that guarantees program stability; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL) supports NYC's plan for UPK and expanded after-school programs and strongly urges the NYS Legislature to approve full, dedicated, and stable funding for all eligible New York State children.