



Media Contact: Natasha Capers, 347.610.2754, ncapers@nyccej.org
Evan Thies, 917.715.9265, evan@brooklynstrategies.com

Parents, Community Organizations and Elected Officials Propose Citywide Community Schools Policy

NYC expansion and investment spurs effort to create standards and sustainability across city's 200+ community schools

****Parents and community school partners available for on-camera or print interviews****

100 parents, community partners and elected officials gathered this morning at City Hall to announce a proposed policy to guide the expansion of community schools.

"CEJ is very excited for this new chapter in the community school movement. We have been advocating for community schools for years and now that we see them coming into fruition, parents and community school partners have worked together to draft a policy that establishes the vision and standards to guide them. We know that to be successful, community schools must be a combination of comprehensive services with rigorous academic curriculum and transformative parent and community engagement. This policy proposal can give the city a firm foundation for the expansion of community schools and will help ensure that for years to come there is clarity to how community schools should be done," said **Felicia Alexander, parent leader with the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice and organizer with Brooklyn Movement Center.**

"Community schools are a cornerstone of the de Blasio administration's education agenda that will bring a holistic approach to education in New York City. A school in Brooklyn could see academically rich afterschool programming and professional development, while a school in the Bronx receives mental health services and English language classes for families," said **Deputy Mayor Richard Buery.** "It is this tailor-made approach to addressing the specific challenges students and communities face that will make the community schools model a hallmark of education in our city. And while we begin the work of forming partnerships with community based organizations and helping schools succeed, we look forward to working with parents and advocates across the city to make community schools work for all of New York's kids."

"Community Schools is a powerful part of the city's strategy to support our students and our schools for success. This policy helps provide a roadmap to ensure that we as a city are doing what it takes to set up all of our Community Schools to attain the success we envision," said **Sister Paulette LoMonaco, Executive Director of Good Shepherd Services.**

"We serve thousands of students and families each year who could benefit from attending community schools, as community schools are defined by this policy. It's absolutely critical that everyone get on the same page about what makes a school a community school," said **Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children.**

"There are many obstacles that can stand between a child and success in school. The community schools model brings together resources from the school, partner organization and community to mitigate those obstacles and give children a clear path to being engaged in learning. The YMCA is proud to stand with the City of New York and our colleagues to bring more community schools to our great city. We believe that partnerships built by community schools support not only the whole child but the whole family and the whole community. We all must work to bring together a full service, well rounded, multi-faceted approach to serving our citizens through community schools and the policy paper being released today does that while preserving the individuality of the community schools model," said **Jack Lund, President & CEO of the YMCA of Greater New York.**

"The success of the Community School model is critical to the children, families, and communities we serve. I commend CEJ for putting forth a well thought out blueprint of vital core elements and functions to ensure we deliver results to effect the transformation we seek," said **Maritza Arroyo, Executive Director of Zone 126.**

"Parents, teachers, and community organizations have the opportunity to work with this new administration to create policies that are good for children. By focusing on what works, and what makes sense for children, we can build community schools that can make a difference in the lives of our students and their families," said **Michael Mulgrew, President of the UFT**

"CSA is pleased to work with the Coalition for Educational Justice in its goal toward improving educational opportunities for high-needs students. Mayor de Blasio's community schools initiative is the foundation from which we can build learning environments that encompass all the critical areas that our children need help in," said **Randi Herman, First Vice President of CSA.**

"The Mayor's Community School initiative provides a holistic vision for our most in need students. This is an opportunity to build relationships with school staff, community residents and service providers. Lets change the way we educate our most important New Yorkers, our children, and support the Community School Policy," said **Public Advocate Letitia James.**

"I'm proud to support the new Community Schools initiative at the Department of Education, along with so many other colleagues and advocates," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.** "By providing a full range of services and working together with parents and community-based organizations, we can ensure that students at these schools succeed at the highest possible levels."