



The 50 Hour Learning Week

***Afterschool Program Expansion,
Community Schools, &
Full Day Kindergarten***



The Independent Democratic Conference

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1966 federally funded analysis, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* led by professor James Coleman at The Johns Hopkins University, we have known that student educational attainment is inextricably linked to factors outside of the control of teachers and administrators, including family background and community environment.¹ However, despite knowing that student achievement is most closely tied to the circumstances a student happens to be born into, the state government continues to focus on narrow school-based education policies that target teachers and administrators.

Now more than ever New York must work to provide students and their families wrap around services that target student needs outside of the classroom. While New York public school teachers and administrators work tremendously hard to provide students the best possible education, the reality is that many other variables outside of their control also significantly affect student learning. And while New York parents work relentlessly hard to provide their children the best upbringing, they too face many variables out of their control that affect their children's educational attainment.

For this reason, the Independent Democratic Conference proposes that New York invest \$416 million in fiscal year 2016-2017 to: (1) expand afterschool programming, (2) invest in community schools, and (3) ensure that every student has access to a full-day kindergarten program. The IDC envisions a New York State that by 2020 provides all K-8 students access to 50 hours per week of rich learning opportunities during each academic year. The 50 Hour Learning Week is a proposal that seeks to increase the hours children spend developing their academic, physical, social, and emotional skills while simultaneously providing their families adequate support during the childrearing process.

KEY FINDINGS

- By expanding afterschool programs, New York State families will save \$1.5 billion annually in private afterschool childcare.
- For every \$1 investment in afterschool program, New York State saves taxpayers \$3 in reduced costs for student remediation and grade repetition; a total \$351 million investment will save taxpayers over \$1 billion.
- For every \$1 investment in afterschool crime prevention programs, the state yields \$5.92 in crime reduction benefits; a \$351 million investment yields \$2 billion in crime reduction benefits.
- Full-day kindergarten produces an average \$4,882 in future benefits from labor market earnings; providing 5,100 current half day kindergarten attendee access to full-day kindergarten yields close to \$25 million in future state benefits.

¹ New York State Education Department. (2009). The Johnson Years. In *Federal Education Policy and the States: 1945-2009*. New York State Archives. Retrieved from http://nysa32.nysed.gov/edpolicy/altformats/ed_background_overview_essay.pdf

WHAT IS THE 50 HOUR LEARNING WEEK?

The 50 Hour Learning Week is the idea that student learning does not and should not stop before and after the normal school hours. Currently, students receive only about 35 hours of academic instruction per week, and often find themselves with limited opportunities to engage in extracurricular programs that support academic, social, emotional and physical growth. This is particularly true for students in K-8, as high school students find part-time employment or participate in student clubs and athletic programs. The 50 Hour Learning Week adds an additional 15 hours per week of rich learning opportunities for students by expanding access to afterschool programs, establishing more community schools that operate before and after school programs, and providing more families access to full-day kindergarten.

Afterschool Programs

Afterschool programs provide children a rich learning environment during the immediate after school hours of 3-6 p.m., five days per week, during the academic calendar. Over a decade of research shows that afterschool programs lead to student academic, physical, social and emotional growth, lower children's propensity to engage in criminal activity, significantly alleviate parents of childcare responsibilities and reduce the financial costs on the State. While a survey conducted in 2014 by the Afterschool Alliance shows that 1.2 million New York school-age students who do not currently participate in an afterschool program would do so if one were available to them, the state's limited capacity only serves 632,000 students.²

Community Schools

Community schools provide residents in a specific community before and after school programs for students, family support, social services, medical, dental and mental health services. These schools are often operated through a partnership between the school system and one or more community agencies before, during, and after school, seven days per week, all year long. An evaluation of 49 community school initiatives across the country published by the Institute for Educational Leadership revealed the positive effects of community schools on student learning and achievement, social behavior and healthy youth development, family well-being, and overall community life.³ Since Mayor de Blasio took office in 2013, 128 new community schools were opened in New York City, and at the state-level, Governor Cuomo provided funding for 72 new community schools during the 2013 and 2014 fiscal years.

Full-Day Kindergarten

Kindergarten is typically the first year a child is exposed to formal education. This year lays the foundation for later years of primary and secondary education. For many students, kindergarten closes any achievement gaps that may exist among five-year-olds. For example, it is well known that by age three, children from high-income households are already exposed to 30 million more

² Afterschool Alliance. (2015). *Afterschool by the Numbers in New York*. Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/NY-afterschool-facts.pdf>

³ Dryfoos, J. *Evaluation of Community Schools: An Early Look*. Coalition for Community Schools. Retrieved from http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Evaluation%20of%20Community%20Schools_joy_dryfoos.pdf

words than children from low-income households.⁴ However, without the necessary funds to operate full-day kindergarten, some school districts are forced to operate half-day kindergarten while some do not provide any program at all. As of the 2014-2015 school year, there are 18 school districts that offered both full-day and half-day kindergarten, five school districts that only offer half-day kindergarten, and 13 school districts that offered no kindergarten option. In total, over 5,100 students across the state are only enrolled in half-day kindergarten due to a lack of adequate state funding for operational and capital expenses. While some districts do not have enough funds to, for example, hire more teachers, other districts do not have enough funds to increase space availability for students.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

Investing in afterschool programs, community schools, and full-day kindergarten has many positive economic and social benefits. Research demonstrates that high quality full-day kindergarten and afterschool programs offered by the state are more economical for families than private childcare services. Furthermore, myriad studies show that while these programs save the state billions of taxpayer dollars in the long-run, they also improve student achievement, increase graduation rates, and lower crime rates among the many benefits.

Economic Impact: Reduces Cost Private School-Aged Childcare

While normal school hours run from 8-3 p.m., normal work hours run from 9-5 p.m. This creates an extra burden on households with school-age children. Without access to afterschool programs that run from 3-6 p.m., households must make the tough choice between reducing total working hours and paying for private childcare services. As of 2014, approximately 632,076 students in New York are enrolled in an afterschool program, as determined by the survey “America After 3 p.m.” conducted by the Afterschool Alliance.⁵ According to a national study published by the U.S. Department of Education, approximately 30 percent of students enrolled in New York afterschool programs attend a fee-based program.⁶ Child Care Aware revealed that New York State families pay approximately \$8,346 per year in childcare services for before and after school childcare.⁷ With close to 189,600 students attending a fee-based afterschool program in New York State and fees that total \$8,346 per student, New York State residents spend close to \$1.5 billion per year in private afterschool programs. Conversely, the average annual funding for an afterschool program in New York State outside of New York City is \$1,500 per student and \$3,000 per student in New York City. **Providing every student in New York that currently attends a fee-based afterschool program the opportunity to attend a state provided afterschool program would save residents \$1.5 billion, and only cost the state approximately \$440 million.**

⁴ Hart, B., & Risley, T. (2003). *The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3*. American Educator, pgs. 4-9. Retrieved from <http://literacy.rice.edu/thirty-million-word-gap>

⁵ See supra note 2.

⁶ Parsad, B. & Lewis, L. (2009). *After-school Programs in Public Elementary Schools*. United States Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED504193>.

⁷ Childcare Aware. (2014). *2014 Childcare in the State of: New York*. Retrieved from <http://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/reports-and-research/statefactsheets/>

Economic Impact: Afterschool Programs Reduce Remediation and Grade Repetition

A study conducted at the Rose Institute of Claremon-McKenna College in California concluded that every \$1 invested in afterschool programming saves taxpayers \$3 in 2001 dollars, not considering the savings affiliated with crime reduction.⁸ Students who participate in afterschool programs are more likely to be on grade level and are less likely to be referred to remedial and special education courses with higher costs. Additionally, students who attend afterschool programs are less likely to repeat a grade. In fact, the authors conservatively estimated that attending an afterschool program reduces a student's likelihood of repeating one grade by 2.1 percent. Students with improved academic performance resulting from afterschool program participation are more likely to graduate from high school, and as a result have higher incomes and rely less on state welfare programs. **A proposed \$301 million increase in funding for afterschool programs will save New Yorkers close to \$900 million in 2015 dollars.**⁹

Economic Impact: Afterschool Programs Reduce Crime Rates

School-age children whose parents do not provide some form of childcare services after school spend on average 20-25 hours per week unsupervised. A study conducted at Columbia University concluded that self-care and boredom could increase the likelihood that a young person will experiment with drugs and alcohol by as much as 50 percent.¹⁰ Moreover, myriad studies show that juvenile delinquency peaks during the hours right after school. In fact, a research brief published by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids New York highlights that juvenile violent crime arrests each hour on school days peaks at 20 percent during 3-6 p.m., and the percent of youth victimized by crime each hour on school days also peaks at 25 percent during 3-6 p.m.¹¹ In New York State, 584,597, or 20 percent of all school-aged children, fall into the unsupervised category; meaning that a fifth of the state's school-age children are unscrupulously left to engage in criminal activity.

The state of Washington commissioned the *Washington State Institute for Public Policy* to study economically efficient crime prevention programs.¹² The researchers conducted a comprehensive analysis of 400 research studies conducted in the United State and Canada over 25 years. The institute concluded that childhood intervention programs yielded \$5.92 in crime reduction benefits for every \$1 dollar spent in 2001 dollars. After converting 2001 into 2015 dollars, **a total \$301 million investment in afterschool programs, scientifically accepted as crime prevention programs, would yield \$1.7 billion in crime reduction benefits.**

⁸ Brown et. al, *The Costs and Benefits of After School Programs: The Estimated Effects of the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002*, The Rose Institute of Claremont-McKenna College, September 2002.

⁹ Calculations conducted with U.S. Department of Labor inflation calculator. Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm

¹⁰ The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. (2003). *National Survey of American Attitudes on Substance Abuse VIII: Teens and Parents*. New York, NY.

¹¹ Fight Crime: Invest in Kids New York. (2007). *New York City's Out of School Time Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime or Youth Enrichment and Activity*. New York, NY. Retrieved from <http://www.fightcrime.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/default/files/reports/NYC%20AS%202020%20pager.pdf>.

¹² Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2001.

Economic Impact: Full-Day Kindergarten Produces Benefits from Labor Market Earnings

Besides providing childcare for parents, kindergarten also lays the foundation to children's academic success. Studies show that, in the long run, students who attend kindergarten do better in school as measured by state standardized test scores. A cost-benefit analysis conducted and released in 2014 by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy showed that, on average, each kindergarten participant produces a \$4,882 benefit to the state from future labor market earnings.¹³ In other words, students that attend full-day kindergarten perform better academically in their later years of primary and secondary education, and eventually obtain jobs that provide the state \$4,882 extra in tax revenue over their lifetime. **Currently, New York has 5,100 enrolled in half-day kindergarten. If each student is given the opportunity to attend full-day kindergarten, the state could receive an additional \$25 million in accumulated benefits.**

Social Impact: Afterschool Programs Improve Academic Achievement

High quality afterschool programs aim to support and improve students' academic performance by offering tutoring services, STEM education, and homework assistance among other learning opportunities. A survey conducted by Research Works, Inc. found that 89 percent of students that attended a 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) afterschool program in New York—aimed at serving low-income students—believe the program at least somewhat helped them do better in school, and 81 percent believe the program at least somewhat helped them become more interested in attending school.¹⁴

Overall, an evaluation of students attending New York State 21st CCLC afterschool programs revealed that 65 percent of teachers indicated improvements in homework completion by attendees and 66.5 percent indicated improvements in class participation. **Meaning that over 108,000 new students could show improvement in homework completion and over 110,000 additional students could show improvement in class participation across the state,** given a high quality afterschool program expansion that would serve 167,000 additional students. Similarly, 46 percent of program attendees demonstrated improvement in their English class and 45 percent showed improvement in their math class. An expansion of high quality afterschool programs to serve 167,000 new students can result in **76,820 students with improved academic performance in their English class and 75,150 students with improved academic performance in their math class.**

Social Impact: Community Schools Improve Attendance and Graduation

An analysis of 130 community schools across New York City revealed that extra-curricular programming including, but not limited to afterschool programs, increased student attendance, reduced student chronic absenteeism, and improved high school graduation rates. In addition to before and after school programming, community schools offer students and their families other forms of academic support and health, dental, and nutritional services. An analysis of attendance

¹³ Washington State Institute for Public Policy. (2014). Full-Day Kindergarten: A Review of the Evidence and Benefit-Cost Analysis. (Document No. 14-01-2202). Retrieved from http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1548/Wsipp_Full-Day-Kindergarten-A-Review-of-the-Evidence-and-Benefit-Cost-Analysis_Final-Report.pdf

¹⁴ Research Works, Inc. (2013). *New York State's 21st Century Community Learning Centers*. New York State Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/21stCCLC/>.

and graduation data on the 130 community schools established by the de Blasio administration starting in the 2014-2015 school year shows significant academic improvements since becoming community schools.

Attendance, chronic absenteeism and graduation data was pulled from each school's 2012-2013 progress report, then the same data was pulled from each school's 2014-2015 quality review snapshot. Attendance at 27 of the 54 K-8 and 6-8 schools with available data improved significantly. **Chronic absenteeism, meaning students with less than 90 percent attendance, reduced at 29 of the 53 schools with available data**, with one school in The Bronx reducing its share of chronically absent students by 17.1 percent. Attendance at transformed community high schools also showed significant progress. **Over 77 percent of new community high schools showed an increase in school attendance**, with one school in Brooklyn improving its attendance rate by 10 percent from 74.6 percent to 85 percent. **Graduation rates at 25 of the 40 community high schools with available data rose an average of 11 percent**, with one school in Queens showing an improvement of 34 percent.

BACKGROUND: STATE AND CITY FUNDING

After School Programs

New York State

In 2014 only 632,000 or 23 percent of the 2.67 million students enrolled in New York State public schools, attended an afterschool program.¹⁵ Even more shocking is that 20 percent of New York State school-age children are left alone during after school hours, and 1.2 million of New York State students who do not attend an afterschool program would do so if one were available to them.¹⁶ Funding for afterschool programs in New York State peaked at \$190 million during FY 07-08, and since then has declined to \$143.5 million for FY 15-16—with \$84.5 coming from the U.S. Department of Education for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.¹⁷ In all, New York State only directed \$59 million for afterschool funding for FY 15-16. While in the past, Governor Cuomo has proposed large expansions for afterschool programming, such as his \$160 million pledge for the 2014-2015 fiscal year, none have been legislated.

New York City

In 2014, 88 percent of the Comprehensive After School System of New York City (COMPASS) budget was funded with city dollars, totaling close to \$140 million; but, by 2015 total funding for the COMPASS program was \$260 million, with \$145 million in the form of state aid.¹⁸ For the 2016 fiscal year, funding for COMPASS totaled \$301 million, of which \$190 million was an increase in state aid directed to the NYC Department of Education (DOE).¹⁹ For the 2015-2016 academic year, New York City has had the capacity to serve 414,905, or 37 percent of the 1.1

¹⁵ See supra note 2.

¹⁶ See supra note 2.

¹⁷ New York State Afterschool Network. (2014). *Funding for Expanded Learning*. New York, NY. Retrieved from <http://www.nysan.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Funding-Stream-Summary-11-17-14.pdf>

¹⁸ New York City Budget Office. (2015). *Will State Funds Be Available Again for Expanded After-School Programs?* New York City. Retrieved from <http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/state-funds-expanded-after-school-march2015.pdf>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

million students enrolled in New York City public schools. However, this does not meet the demand expressed by the city's students and their families. The study "America After 3 p.m." conducted in 2014 by the Afterschool Alliance, revealed that 506,471, or 67 percent of students in New York City who do not currently participate in an afterschool program, would do so if one were made available to them.²⁰ While the most recent increase in state aid has provided seats for approximately 70,833 new students in New York City, much more funding is still needed to cover the remaining 435,638 students.

Community Schools

New York State

The Community Schools Grant Initiative was recommended by Governor Cuomo and enacted in the 2013-2014 budget. The program reflected the recommendations of the New NY Education Reform Commission and was consistent with the New York State Board of Regents advocacy for establishing programs for students and families that provide academic enrichment activities, along with a broad array of student and family development opportunities within their communities. The community schools initiatives sought to coordinate and maximize public, non-profit, and private resources to deliver critical services to students and their families, and thereby increase student achievement and attain other positive outcomes.

Funding for the program was first provided for the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. Thirty schools were selected and given \$500,000 grants to be distributed over the course of three years. Another \$15 million were made available in appropriations for the 2014-2015 academic year to transform an additional 32 schools in the state into community schools. Funding for the grant program has since been discontinued, and local education agencies and schools have had to find other sources of funding for support and development. In January 2016, Governor Cuomo proposed \$100 million in funding to convert failing and persistently failing schools into community schools and provide funds for other high need districts.

New York City

The de Blasio administration launched the NYC Community Schools Initiative in June 2014 when a \$52 million grant to support the development of 45 community schools was established. Each school received approximately \$300,000 per year for four consecutive years. The four-year grant came directly from the Attendance Improvement and Drop-Out Prevention (AIDP) funding provided by SED. The initiative is led by the DOE in partnership with United Way of New York City and The Children's Aid Society.

Funding for the next phase of the strategic plan began at the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, and full implementation started in September 2015 for the 2015-2016 academic year. In October 2014, the administration announced that the community schools model would be at the center of their greater renewal schools program. The mayor and schools chancellor committed to using funds from their renewal schools program to transform identified schools into community schools. By the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, 94 schools were identified by the city as

²⁰ See supra note 2.

demonstrating persistently low academic performance, and as a result labeled as renewal schools. Using funds provided by the city, starting in the 2015-2016 academic year, these schools were put on a path to become community schools.

The following phase in the administration's plan is to work with schools that were operating as community schools before this big initiative, but may not meet the new expectations set by the DOE, while working to ensure all new district schools are prepared to operate as community schools. The administration is aware that community schools already existed in New York City, but may need funds to enhance their quality. Additionally, the administration is committed to ensuring that all new district schools created by the Office of School Design and Charter Partnership are designed to become fully-developed community schools. This plan is set to begin at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year and beginning of the 2016-2017 academic year. Funds for this phase have not been secured and will need state assistance.

The last phase of the administration's plan is to develop a new grant process for additional community schools outside of the aforementioned. The DOE will evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of AIDP and renewal program-funded schools as well as support systems established for existing schools. Using the evaluations, the administration will have access to new information for future community schools. While the evaluation and data collection process began in 2014, the new grant process will not be set to start until the 2016-2017 academic year. Funding for this phase has not been secured and will need state aid. In total, the administration expects to have over 200 community schools by the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

Full-Day Kindergarten

New York State makes funds available for school districts who wish to implement new full-day kindergarten programs or convert half-day kindergarten programs into full-day programs. In the 2015-2016 fiscal year budget, \$5.78 million were appropriated as Full-Day Kindergarten Conversion Aid. While this aid is useful to cover operating expenses, some districts including the Shenendehowa school district, do not have the physical capacity to operate full-day kindergarten, which falls under a capital expense. The Superintendent of Shenendehowa school district, Dr. Robinson, explained he "would not be able to physically, from a facilities perspective, be able to do it," in sharing his difficulties with expanding pre-kindergarten and kindergarten options for his students.²¹ There are over 30 school districts who could benefit from new funds to cover the capital expenses associated with full-day kindergarten program expansion.

BUDGET PROPOSALS

Afterschool Program Expansion

The IDC proposes a total state investment of \$550 million, a \$301 million increase, for high quality afterschool programs that collaborate with schools that incorporate certified teachers in their efforts. The appropriations will create approximately 128,000 new seats for nearly 167,000 students. The funds are to be split so that New York City receives \$392.38 million and the rest of

²¹ Baker, Al. (2014). *Need for Full-day Kindergarten Is Lost in Pre-K Debate, Critics Say*. The New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/07/education/full-day-kindergarten-not-pre-k-should-be-new-yorks-goal-critics-say.html?_r=0

the state receives \$157.62 million. Through this plan, by fiscal year 2017 New York City will have the capacity to serve about 45 percent of the total student population—up from the current 37 percent— by serving 85,000 additional students; and New York State will be able to serve 30 percent of the total student population—a 25 percent increase in total students served during fiscal year 2016—by serving 167,000 additional students, of which 82,000 reside outside of New York City. Appropriations would be as follows:

- Appropriate \$371.5 million directly to the New York City DYCD to continue \$190 million in funding from the 2015-2016 fiscal year and provide a direct \$181.5 million increase in funding for high quality afterschool programs.
- Appropriate \$85 million to the Youth Development Program at the OFCS to restore \$15.4 million in funding from the 2015-2016 fiscal year and increase funding by \$69.6 million. Of the new funds, 30 percent or \$20.88 million will be redirected to New York City DYCD through the county-based formula, and 70 percent or \$48.72 million will be spread throughout the rest of the state.
- Appropriate \$69.2 million to the Advantage Afterschool Program to restore \$19.3 million in funding from fiscal year 2015-2016 and increase funding by \$49.9 million for fiscal year 2016-2017.
- Maintain funding for the Extended School Day/School Violence Prevention program at \$24.3 million for fiscal year 2017.

Community Schools

The IDC supports the Executive’s community schools proposal to provide \$75 million in funds for the conversion of failing and persistently failing schools into community schools, and an additional \$25 million for high need school districts to use as community school conversion funds. However, because the IDC so strongly believes in the community schools model and the potential it has for all students across New York State, the IDC proposes a third tier be added to the Executive’s current proposal. The third tier will make available \$50 million for any school across the state that desires to become a community school. The grant money will come in the form of a \$500,000 three-year grant for 100 schools in FY 2016-2017. Ultimately, the IDC seeks to invest \$200 million over the course of four years to convert 400 schools into community schools. An investment of this magnitude will serve an additional 200,000 students and their families by 2020. The IDC will also seek \$5 million dollars in new funds to support existing community schools to ensure they continue to provide enriching programs to the communities they serve.

Kindergarten Conversion Fund

New York State has finally acknowledged the importance of early childhood education. Since the start of the 2013-2014 academic year, children across the state have had access to a seat at a full-day pre-kindergarten program. However, it is much to the IDC’s consternation that over 5,100 students will leave a full-day pre-kindergarten program and be forced to enroll into a half-day kindergarten program due to a lack of state funding, while other students will simply not

have an option to attend kindergarten. Seeking to end a practice that results in a grave inequity, the IDC proposes that New York State use forfeited lottery prizes to provide its districts with funding to expand full-day kindergarten offerings across the state. With approximately \$60 million in annual unclaimed lottery prizes, New York State school districts will be able to hire more educators and increase the space available to serve more students.

CONCLUSION

While parents and teachers arduously work to provide New York State children the best route to academic success, the reality is that they face an insurmountable number of factors outside of their control that impact student educational attainment. As government, it is our responsibility to work with teachers and parents, and help eliminate some of the negative variables affecting our students. To that end, the IDC proposes the 50 Hour Learning Week; the idea that planned and intentional learning should not stop after school hours. Students must have 15 hours per week of additional rich learning programs that support academic, social, emotional, and physical growth. To achieve that goal, we must invest \$416 million in fiscal year 2016-2017 to expand afterschool programs for 167,000 additional students, establish the first 100 of 400 new community schools that will eventually serve 200,000 students, support existing community schools, and fund full-day kindergarten for 5,100 students currently enrolled in half-day kindergarten. The IDC is ready to create a future that by the 2020 academic year, all 1.7 million students in K-8 will have access to 50 hours of rich learning opportunities per week while their parents and teachers are better supported through more inclusive programming.