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City Confirms Breakthrough, Transformative New Investment in School Social Workers

NEW YORK, NY – Today's handshake agreement on the Fiscal Year 2020 budget includes a remarkable new investment set to sustain 200 new social workers in New York City's public schools. The Children's Defense Fund - New York (CDF-NY) sincerely thanks the City Council and the Mayor for this tremendous commitment to ensuring the presence of positive school support staff, as we have long insisted that investing in caring school communities is a crucial piece of ending the criminalization of young people in their classrooms.

Throughout this budget process CDF-NY and our partners have consistently focused on the urgent need for social workers in our schools: there are currently only [1,320 full-time social workers](#) in a school system that serves over 1.1 million students. Today's win also follows an [estimate released by the City's Independent Budget Office](#) that placing a full-time social worker in each of the 716 public schools that do not have one would cost \$94.4 million. The City's commitment to this newly dedicated funding is a crucial step forward for education justice in New York City.

Two CDF-NY education advocates issued the following statements in response to the news:

"This investment offers secure ground for New York's students, fueling new relationships that unfortunately have been absent from many schools leading up to this point," said Gary Edwards, a high school senior at a Brooklyn school operating without a single social worker. "Students come to school with mental health needs and are looking for supports and opportunities. This is an exciting step toward overcoming the obstacles that prevent students from reaching beyond their limitations."

"Thank you for providing students with this investment; our schools need the support that social workers can provide, like helping students succeed in school and move along the path to college," said Malachi Jones, a high school junior at a Brooklyn school with a social worker ratio of 1 to 3,789 students. "This spending means students all around the five boroughs who are and have been struggling will be able to turn to a social worker and better commit to their academics and learning."

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The Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.