

April 27, 2004

Jeanne B. Mullgrav  
Commissioner  
Department of Youth and Community Development  
156 William Street  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: Addendum to the OST concept paper**

Dear Commissioner Mullgrav:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 was grateful for the opportunity to comment on the out-of-school-time RFP concept paper and was pleased to see many of our comments echoed in the proposed revisions submitted by funders and providers through the Fund for the City of New York. We strongly agree with three significant issues summarized in the Addendum to the OST concept paper prepared by this group. Firstly, we remain greatly concerned about potential cuts to youth services funding; secondly, DYCD's proposed timeline for releasing the new RFP precludes genuine community input; and thirdly, a smaller geographic area than a DOE region for funding allocation is imperative. We have elaborated on each of these points below.

It is our understanding that the goal of the OST initiative is to provide improved coordination, creativity and cost-effectiveness for youth programming. While we are encouraged by DYCD's efforts to create a more efficient and effective system to fund youth services, we fail to understand how this will be possible given the proposed budget cuts, estimated at \$27 million. Already there are extremely limited resources available for safe recreational, cultural and educational activities for youth and many programs are unable to accept new participants due to a lack of capacity. In order to improve upon the structure of youth services, which already is operating under budget, it will be essential that the City maintain, at a minimum, current funding levels.

DYCD has stated that the OST RFP will be released next month. At the meeting hosted by the Office of the Mayor on March 30, 2004, community members were told that the City would be forming additional committees to inform the OST process including community leaders, business leaders and parents, among others. We believe that releasing the new RFP in May of 2004 would not allow time for the City to gather and consider community input or make revisions to the RFP based on this input.

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Additionally, we believe that that the allocation of funds to an area defined by its community board, as opposed to a large DOE Region, would promote detailed needs assessments, service customizations based upon these assessments and active involvement of community boards.

For your convenience, we have enclosed the letter we prepared on April 7, 2004, which outlines Manhattan Community Board No. 4's concerns and recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff  
Chair

This letter was approved by Manhattan Community Board No. 4's Executive Committee on April 26, 2004 and is subject to ratification or revision by the full board at its next meeting on May 5, 2004. Any revisions will be forwarded.

cc: Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City  
Virginia Fields, Manhattan, Borough President  
Local Elected Officials  
Chair, Community Board No. 7  
Executive Director, 52<sup>nd</sup> Street Project