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Phys Ed 4 All Coalition Applauds Mayor de Blasio's Executive Budget, Highlights Vision to Improve in Physical Education in New York City Schools

NEW YORK, NY, April 26, 2016 – The Phys Ed 4 All Coalition applauds Mayor de Blasio's Executive Budget for including significant funding to improve physical education in New York City schools and bring it into compliance with New York state law.

According to state law, all elementary school students should receive a minimum of 120 minutes of quality physical education per week and students in the secondary schools should receive 90 minutes of quality physical education per week. Right now in New York City, many of our schools do not meet the state requirements for quality physical education.

Research shows physical activity improves brain function and student achievement. Yet schools have reduced time in physical education, limiting the opportunity to learn critical skills and fundamental knowledge regarding physical fitness and health.

The Phys Ed 4 All Coalition is comprised of community-based organizations, advocates, parents, educators, and health professionals dedicated to improving the quality and quantity of physical education in New York City schools. At a minimum, the coalition believes that city schools must provide the basic, essential physical education required by state law. The coalition was founded on the premise that comprehensive, quality PE is a right, not a privilege, and must be equally and consistently provided to every city student at all grade levels. The Phys Ed 4 All coalition develops and implements targeted strategies related to community organizing, media advocacy and policy campaigns to support students, families and the teaching community with our unified goal in fostering generations with greater academic success and improved health outcomes.

"The American Heart Association is thrilled by the strong support shown by Mayor de Blasio around the improvement of quality physical education in our schools and we look forward to working with the City Council to implement this vision of improved physical education," said Robin Vitale, Senior Director of Government Relations, American Heart Association. "We know that quality physical

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education puts a child on the right path for a lifetime of healthy habits and every child deserves a chance to live a long, heart-healthy life.”

“Today’s powerful announcement as part of the budget package shows us loudly and clearly that New York cares about the health of our 1.1 million school kids,” said Michael Davoli, Director of Government Relations for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. “Thank you Mayor de Blasio.”

“As a member of PE4All coalition Steering Committee, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest applauds Mayor de Blasio and his administration on their strong commitment to physical education in New York City public schools,” said Laura Redman, Director, Health Justice Program, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. “Studies show that physical education improves children’s health and academic achievement. By providing more funding for equal access to physical education, the City is making an important step in addressing health disparities. We are look forward to working with the City to improve physical education for all students across the five boroughs.”

“We were so happy to learn that Mayor de Blasio has included funds to improve physical education in our schools,” said Mireya Solis, member of Make the Road NY’s Parents in Action committee in Jackson Heights. “My son, Samuel, goes to P.S.148, where he only has gym once a week. I, along with other parents at P.S.148, are relieved that our voices have been heard and that we can count on better PE in our schools and health for our children.”

“New York City will be a leader in Phys Ed reform thanks to Mayor de Blasio and the City Council’s efforts. Students will soon have quality physical education as part of their educational routine. There are undeniable links between regular PE and healthy adolescent development both cognitively and affectively. We look forward to working with you further on this important initiative,” said Brian Semonian, Founder Phys Ed Plus.

“The time has come for the City’s political leadership to recognize the vital importance of physical education as a key element in the education of our children,” says Jacqueline Ebanks, Executive Director of the Women’s City Club of New York. “We applaud Mayor de Blasio for stepping up because our children deserve nothing less.”

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