

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Mark- Viverito:

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More than 550,000 students are crammed into overcrowded schools, according to the Department of Education's own utilization figures – a number that will surely grow if the City Council approves the Mayor's rezoning proposals to build thousands of new affordable and market rate housing units throughout the city.

The DOE now admits a **need of approximately 83,000** additional school seats citywide – based upon enrollment projection. Yet the city is currently planning to fund only about 59% percent of these seats. The percent of seats needed by 2019 with sites and in the process of design is even lower –only 15%.

We urge you to fund the entire DOE's estimate of 83,000 seats, which would cost an additional \$130 million more per year in city funds.

But we also urge you to create a Commission to reform and improve the efficiency and accuracy of school siting and planning –or else the overcrowding and backlog of seats will grow even larger.

There are overcrowded communities that have waited for years for a school to be sited in their neighborhoods. The school planning process is broken and must be overhauled so that from now on, we can ensure that schools are built along with housing, not years afterwards.

On the issue of school overcrowding, the city is always playing catch up, and falling further behind. As a result, our kids are suffering. ***It is time to do something about this.***

Yours sincerely,