



NEWS RELEASE

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University Settlement will expand engagement with PS/MS 34 as its Community Schools partner

New York, NY – The New York City Department of Education has selected University Settlement as the Community Schools partner for New York City Public School/Middle School 34, the social justice human services agency announced today.

“The Community Schools model, which engages and supports students by engaging and supporting each family in the educational community and the neighborhood as a whole by prioritizing access to social supports, mental healthcare, and the arts, is strongly consistent with University Settlement’s values and approach,” said **Melissa Aase**, *CEO of University Settlement*. “We’re delighted to have the opportunity to significantly deepen our already strong partnership with Principal Bryan Glover, his leadership team, and everyone who is a part of the PS/MS 34 community.”

“As our school’s long-standing after-school provider, University Settlement’s connection to families has always been strong and supportive,” said **Principal Brian Glover**, *PS/MS 34 Franklin D. Roosevelt School*. “I am happy and proud to deepen our connection by welcoming University Settlement as our Community Schools partner. Their advocacy for the community, support for our families, and support for our staff helped our community through some very tough times during the pandemic. Together, we are going to show NYC the brilliance and genius that lives in all PS/MS 34 Jaguars.”

The selection of University Settlement as PS/MS 34’s Community School partner is a significant milestone in a partnership that began in 2014, when the settlement house began engaging the school’s students with SONYC afterschool expanded learning programming. Students currently access a wide variety of activities through this partnership, including homework assistance and academic supports, basketball tournaments and staff vs. students games, dance classes, and leadership opportunities. In January 2020, the Settlement began offering mental health services to the PS/MS 34 school community, which will be significantly augmented as part of the Community Schools partnership.

University Settlement, a leader in youth development services in New York City, first established a school-based community center as part of the first class of Beacon Programs in 1991, and has grown and operated an extensive network of high-quality afterschool programs over the last 30+ years. It currently partners with thousands of NYC public school students by offering high-quality educationally enriching programs at 17 campuses throughout Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn, including the Community School at the Middle School of Media, Law, and Fine Arts in Brooklyn.

"We know from experience that the key to a Community School's success is understanding the community's goals and constantly incorporating the perspectives and voices of all stakeholders including students, caregivers, teachers, and school leadership," said **Monique Flores**, *Associate Executive Director for Youth programs, University Settlement*. "We are excited to leverage the additional resources granted to Community Schools to respond to PS/MS 34's priorities even more effectively, enabling us to create powerfully responsive, engaging, and effective services that empower all members of the community to thrive."

"University Settlement has grown to become a strong presence at our school, and in partnership we've helped build a greater sense of community," said **Anthony Santos**, Community School Director at PS/MS 34, who has played particularly active role in deepening University Settlement's relationship with the school. "We support families with mental health needs, afterschool, summer camp, and even provide graduating middle school students with their first work experience. Our staff create a safe and enriching environment for our students and families each day, and we are thrilled to be able to deepen our work with our community to help make PS/MS 34 the place to be!"

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About University Settlement

University Settlement partners with 40,000 New Yorkers on the Lower East Side and in Brooklyn every year to build on their strengths as they achieve healthy, stable, and remarkable lives. For over 135 years, we've collaborated with our neighbors to pioneer highly effective programs that fight poverty and systemic inequality. Established in 1886 as the first Settlement House in the United States, we bring the values of that movement into the 21st century by meeting New Yorkers where they live, listening deeply to all perspectives, engaging with every individual holistically, and creating space for people to organize. Joining together with our neighbors to advocate for justice and equality, we help build community strength.

We work with New Yorkers of all ages. We infuse a commitment to civic engagement, equity, and communal action into each of our programs, which include early childhood

education, mental health and wellness, benefits assistance and eviction prevention, adult literacy and education, healthy aging, community and recreation centers, performing and visual arts, and youth development.

Learn more at www.universitysettlement.org.