



**NEW YORK STATE ALLIANCE
OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS, INC**

Testimony presented by the
New York State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, Inc.
to the
Senate Finance Committee
and the Assembly Ways & Means Committee

Human Services FY 2027 Executive Budget
February 5, 2026

Good afternoon, Chairpersons Krueger and Pretlow, and Children & Families Chairpersons Brisport and Hevesi.

My name is Lori A. Rivenburgh. I am the President of the New York State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs and the Executive Director of the Town of Wallkill Boys & Girls Club. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

The New York State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs represents 181 Club sites across New York State, serving more than 133,000 young people annually. Our Clubs span the entire state—from Southampton on Long Island to Ogdensburg in the North Country and Niagara Falls in Western New York. We serve urban, suburban, and rural communities, including Indian reservations and military bases. Many of our Clubs have been pillars of their communities for decades, and the youth and staff we serve reflect the communities in which they live.

Among the young people we serve:

- 69 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunch
- 44 percent live in single-parent households

Boys & Girls Clubs play a vital role in ensuring children and youth have safe, supportive places to go during out-of-school time. At our Clubs, young people participate in innovative, evidence-based programs that help them succeed academically, develop strong character and citizenship, and lead healthy, productive lives—empowering them to discover their great futures.

We applaud the Governor's continued investment in afterschool programming. After school programs deliver proven benefits, including improved academic outcomes, stronger social and emotional skills, and safe, structured environments for learning and growth. This work is at the very core of what Boys & Girls Clubs do every day.

The Executive Budget proposes \$116 million for Learning and Enrichment After-School Program Supports (LEAPS). Over the past two years, LEAPS funding has enabled providers, including 16 Boys & Girls Clubs, to deliver high-quality afterschool programming to communities across New York State. State support is critical to our mission, and continued investment will allow Boys & Girls Clubs to sustain and strengthen these essential programs.

There are some communities that unfortunately were not eligible for LEAPS due to the percentage of economically disadvantaged students but that could greatly benefit from state supported after school programs. For these reasons the Alliance supports the additional \$180 million investment proposed by the New York State Network for Youth Success to expand and strengthen LEAPS, fully fund high-quality eligible applicants, and restore access to afterschool programs for students who were left out of current investments.

Finally, the New York State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs supports the Executive Budget proposal to create a pathway toward affordable, universal child care for children under the age of five. This is a critical investment in working families and young children, as child care remains both essential and too often inaccessible or unaffordable.

We urge the Governor and the Legislature to build on this important proposal by advancing a vision for universal out-of-school time, ensuring that school-aged children also have access to safe, enriching opportunities beyond the school day. Many young people, particularly those whose parents work second or third shifts, lack safe, structured places to go after school. Boys & Girls Clubs provide environments where youth continue learning, build positive relationships, and engage in positive youth development with caring, trained mentors.

Robust afterschool and out-of-school time support are a critical investment in the safety, development, and long-term success of New York's children and youth.

We support the Executive's proposed funding to continue the Youth Development Program and the Youth Sports and Education Opportunity Fund (YSEF), which provide critical support to many Clubs. We strongly urge the Legislature to restore \$10 million for Youth Team Sports. Without this restoration, Clubs will be forced to reduce or eliminate programming that has consistently served youth over the past three years.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Lori A. Rivenburgh, M.A. (she/her), Executive Director
Town of Wallkill Boys & Girls Club, Inc.
(845) 342-8833, lrivenburgh@bgcorange.org