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MEDIA ALERT

NYC Public School Parents Launch Political Fund to Reopen Schools

The fund—NYC Kids Belong in School—is modeled after a Pennsylvania-based PAC with similar goals

New York City—Almost one year after Mayor Bill de Blasio shuttered New York City public schools, a group of frustrated parent advocates have launched a political fund dedicated to fully reopening the City's schools for the system's 1 million students.

According to its [website](#), the fund is a "New York State-registered Independent Expenditure Committee (IEC) dedicated to the immediate and full reopening of all New York City public schools, five days a week, with certified teachers providing in-person instruction."

"After months of protests, signing and delivering petitions, and being ignored by our elected leaders, it has become clear that the fight to fully reopen New York City schools is a political one, and it is a financial one," said Megan Cossey, one of the IEC's founders. She is also one of the original organizers of [#KeepNYCSchoolsOpen](#), a coalition of New York City families who began publicly protesting in November after the Mayor announced a wave of school closures.

The fund was inspired by and modeled after a Pennsylvania-based political action committee (PAC) called the Keeping Kids in School PAC, which was launched in January by a group of parents with similar goals. However, while the Pennsylvania PAC was created to support school board candidates who support five-day-a-week in-person learning, the NYC Kids Belong in School fund will not contribute to political campaigns.

"New York City doesn't have a school board, unlike most school districts," Cossey explained. "Our school board is the Mayor, who is the only elected official to wield control over the school system, and even though this is an election year, the new mayor won't take office until 2022."

Instead, the NYC Kids Belong In School IEC will use the money it fundraises to raise public and political awareness about the status of New York City's public schools, especially around the issue of what the 2021-2022 school year will look like.

"Despite what the Mayor and union leaders want us to believe, school is barely open," said Daniela Jampel, the fund's spokesperson. "Most children are entirely remote, and the few who do get an in-person education generally go only a handful of days every month. Although the Mayor claims that school will return full time in September, parents are rightfully skeptical that without a firm plan for September that addresses social distancing and has buy-in from educators and labor leaders, school will not return to normalcy for the 2021-22 school year."

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