

F.A.Q.S. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is SONYC?

- a. The Comprehensive After School System of NYC (COMPASS NYC) integrates the best Out-of-School Time (OST) practices with the unprecedented expansion of SONYC (School's Out New York City) afterschool programs serving the City's middle school students. Programs are offered at no cost to young people and are strategically located in public and private schools, community centers, religious institutions, public housing, and recreational facilities throughout the City. COMPASS NYC aims to help youth build skills to support their academic achievement, raise their confidence, and cultivate their leadership skills through service learning and other civic engagement opportunities. SONYC serves as a pathway to success for youth in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Structured like clubs, the model offers youth choice in how they spend their time; provides rigorous instruction in sports and arts; and requires youth leadership through service. NYC becomes the classroom through trips and opportunities for instruction beyond the traditional facilities.

2. What is Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City's role in this?

- a. BBBS of NYC is a community based organization which responded to a request for proposal issued by the department of youth and community development to facilitate a high quality after school program. BBBS of NYC partnered with MS 447 to facilitate the after school program

3. How is this after school program differ from after school "clubs"?

- a. A club is an association of persons for some common object usually jointly supported and meeting periodically. A program is a schedule of activities and procedures to be followed.
- b. The SONYC program offers a variety of structured programming focused around science, technology, engineering and math (stem), and literacy. SONYC also provides unstructured programming such recreational activities throughout the school year. All activities are supervised by BBBS of NYC employees, specifically group leaders and activity specialists. SONYC participants must maintain a rate of participation (80% or better) to remain in the program.

4. Do MS 447 teachers provide services in the SONYC program?

- a. BBBS of NYC has employed a handful of MS 447 teachers who will take on the role of activity specialist providing specific activities (i.e. home work help, yoga, and yearbook).

5. What is the supervisory structure of the BBBS SONYC program @ MS 447?

- a. A full time **Program Director** coordinates the overall program including but not limited to hiring/ managing of staff, scheduling activities, reserving space, communicating with MS 447 staff, parents and other stake holders etc.
- b. A part time **Education Specialist** will develop curriculum in which group leaders and activity specialist will facilitate
- c. Part time **Group Leaders** who take on a supervisory role within the activities offered. They will be responsible for taking attendance, providing snack, co leading activities, facilitating leadership activities and greeting and dismissing parents, chaperoning trips.
- d. Part time **Activity Specialists** will work with the Education Specialist to develop curriculum for specific activities. They will co-lead activities with the assistance of group leaders in specific areas: stem, literacy, recreation, drama, dance, homework help etc.

6. What is the enrollment process?

- a. Should parents and/or students be interested in joining the SONYC program:
 - i. The first step is to complete the registration form and return to the SONYC mailbox in the main office
 1. Applications can be found on the MS 447 website or hard copies in the main office.
 - ii. Second, a confirmation will be sent via phone /or email that the student has been accepted
 - iii. Student will work with program director and other staff members to select a programming schedule.
 - iv. Students will receive a program to follow from January - June (student may switch from activity once per month (i.e.student attend Robotics for 4 weeks then switches to Soccer the 5th week, pending space is available in activity). .
 - v. Students will attend programming

7. What is the final day of enrollment into the BBBS SONYC program?

- a. Enrollment may be opened at Director's discretion on a rolling basis pending enrollment numbers

8. Is there any cost to the program?

- a. No. The program is **FREE** for all participants regardless of economic status.

9. Does my child have to attend 4-5 days?

- a. Through negotiations we DYCD, our funder, we are able to have students attend a minimum of 2 days per week in our Spring Semester. However, we encourage students to attend as much as possible.
- b. The more a student attends the program the more opportunities they will have to obtain incentives, such as gift cards, movie tickets, trips and food vouchers.
- c. Enrollment will continue on an ongoing basis or until we reach capacity (120 students per day).

10. Will homework help be offered?

- a. **Yes. BUT homework help differs each day.**
- b. Each day, students will have homework time (Leadership in academics) for 30 minutes either in the beginning of the day or the end of the day. 2 days per week we offer three 1 hour sessions of group academic assistance with a MS 447 teacher.
- c. **Although homework help is offered, the emphasis is on help, not completion.** The BBBS SONYC program provides engaging activities that will allow students to learn concepts and strategies to approach course work. Completion is not guaranteed. Thus please speak with your child and **check** that their class assignments have been completed on a daily basis.

11. My child only needs homework help. Can they attend only this activity?

- a. Unfortunately, **NO**.
- b. We understand that homework can take quite a bit of time to complete. This is why we offer daily homework time and 5 hours of homework help/assistance per week. BBBS SONYC program @ MS 447 is not setup to be solely an academic enrichment program. We provide a range of structured, unstructured, academic and recreational programs throughout the week.

12. What is the daily schedule look like?

- a. The daily breakdown is as follows:
 - i. 2:20 pm . 2:30pm snack (3rd floor cafeteria)
 - ii. 2:30-3:00pm . Leadership in Academics (homework time) or Team Building Activities
 - iii. 3pm-4pm session 1 (classrooms, gym or auditorium)
 - iv. 4pm- 5pm . session 2 (classrooms, gym or auditorium)
 - v. 5:00-5:30 . leadership and teambuilding activities (gym, auditorium, classrooms)
 - vi. 5:30-5:45 dismissal (cafeteria)
- b. **Rooms in which activities held are subject to change***
- c. Each session consists of 4 activities in which the participant can choose from.
- d. Each activity has a capacity of 30 participants
- e. Participants will receive STEM . related activities, Literacy activities, structured & unstructured physical activity, academic enrichment and leadership activities
 - i. Stem activities include: robotics, computer programming
 - ii. Literacy activities include: drama, spoken word, vocals, music

13. What type of snack is provided?

- a. Snack is provided by the Department of Education Food Services.
Monthly Snack Menu can be found at:
<http://www.schoolfoodnyc.org/schoolfood/MenusDailyDisplay.aspx>
- b. Snack is not intended to be a full meal, thus if you wish, your child is allowed to bring in extra snack for themselves and eat it during the snack period.

14. Can my child attend multiple sessions of the same activity?

- a. **No. The second session of activities (.i.e. Robotics) will teach the same lesson as was taught the first session but to new set of students. Going to the same activities twice will not benefit the student as they will review the same lesson they received. Thus we ask students to choose a different second activity making their afterschool experience diverse and engaging.**

15. Will activities be separated by grade?

- a. All activities will welcome 6th, 7th and 8th graders to attend. We will build community and leadership among the SONYC participants. Pending the outcome of the fall session, modifications to programming including the potential to make activities grade specific may be made.

16. Where will activities take place?

- a. Activities will place on the 3rd and 4th floor classrooms, gym, auditorium and cafeteria of MS 447

17. How many staff members will be supervising the participants?

- a. Each activity will have 2 staff members with a maximum of 30 participants. In accordance with school age child care regulations we maintain a 1:15 ratio at all times.
- b. BBBS has hired activity specialists and group leaders as well as MS 447 teachers, all who hold credentials to match the activity they will be leading.

18. My child is a part of NEST and/or has an IEP, can SONYC accommodate the needs of my child?

- a. Please refer individual questions to the Program Director.

19. What are the start and end dates of the program.

- a. The program will run from September 15, 2014 - June 26, 2015 for a total of 35 weeks
 - i. 2 cycles: September- January, January 20th . June 26th

20. Will the program be open when school is closed (holidays, breaks)

- a. No. The program will follow the DOE school schedule. When school is closed, so is the program.
- b. There may be programming or individual days during the February 2015 mid-Winter Break. The Program director will provide information as it becomes available.

21. Will SONYC be in session when the school has half days for parent teacher conferences?

- a. Yes, with modified hours. More information will be provided closer to those days.

22. May my child leave the program early?

- a. Participants should remain for the entire time of 2:20-5:30pm. However if a participant needs to leave early or arrive late due to doctor's appointment or other family obligation, it will be approved with prior written notice (email) to Program Director.

23. How will I know which room to pick up my child from?

- a. During dismissal time 5:30pm -5:45pm, students will be located in the cafeteria.
 - i. Enter through Dean Street (Blue Doors) and walk up to the 3rd floor.
 - ii. SONYC staff members will direct you to the room.
- b. Should you be picking your child earlier than dismissal, please contact Program Director to locate your child.
 - i. **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOUR CHILD DOWNSTAIRS ON DEAN STREET EXIT, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU PROVIDE PERMISSION FOR YOUR CHILD TO GO HOME ON THEIR OWN SO WE MAY DISMISS THEM FROM CAFÉ AT 5:30PM. STUDENTS WILL SIGN THEMSELVES OUT AS OPPOSE TO PARENTS COMING UP AND SIGNING THEIR CHILD OUT.**

24. Whom do I contact if I have a question or concern?

- a. Please contact Antonio Capellan, Program Director of BBBS of NYC SONYC program at 646-647-5862 or acapellan@bigsnyc.org