

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.

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

- a. BBBSNYC has employed a handful of MS 447 teachers who will take on the role of activity specialist providing specific activities (i.e. wrestling, group tutoring, game factory).

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. On scheduled field trips or events, we may ask parents to supply their children with funds to particular to event (I.E. Dave & Busters games, Movie- tickets will be paid by SONYC but snacks will not be purchased)

9. What is the minimal amount of days my child may attend?

- a. Your child can attend as many days as they are able to without restriction. In order for child to get the best out of SONYC. We recommend 3 days of programming.
- b. Participants who attend more frequently, will have an opportunity to earn %SONYC Bucks+ to be used to purchase incentives such as Movie Tickets, gift cards and admittance into field trips.
- c. Lastly, our program has a daily capacity of 120 participants. As our program grows participants who attend less frequently may be in jeopardy of losing their program slot to participants attending more days. This may also be the case for participants who leave early in the day (i.e. 4:15pm instead of 5:45pm)

10. Will homework help be offered?

- a. **Yes. BUT homework help differs each day.**
- b. Each day, students will have homework time (Study Lab) for 30 minutes either in the beginning of the day or the end of the day. On Wednesdays we offer two 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**. However if a student has homework or projects to complete on specific day, they may opt to attend 2 sessions of Study Lab or 2 sessions of Group Tutoring when offered. Study lab is offered for 30 minutes at the beginning and end of the day.
- b. We understand that homework can take quite a bit of time to complete. This is why we offer daily homework time and 6 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.
- c. **On Wednesdays and Thursdays, MS 447 teachers provide office hours from 2:35- 3:35pm in which student may gain assistance on specific assignments. We encourage your child to take advantage when teachers are available**

12. What is the daily schedule look like?

- a. The daily breakdown is as follows: **Monday- Thursday**
 - i. 2:35 pm . 2:45 pm snack (3rd floor cafeteria)
 - ii. 2:45-3:15pm . Study Lab (homework time) or SONYC Challenge (Team Building Activities)
 - iii. 3:15pm-4:15pm session 1 (classrooms, gym or auditorium)
 - iv. 4:15pm- 5:15pm . session 2 (classrooms, gym or auditorium)
 - v. 5:15-5:45 . Study Lab (homework time) or SONYC Challenge (Team Building Activities)
 - vi. 5:45-6:00 pm dismissal (Room 305)
- b. **Friday Schedule**
 - i. 2:35- 2:45pm . Snack (3rd Floor Cafeteria)
 - ii. 2:45pm . 3:30pm . Session 1
 - iii. 3:30- 4:15pm -Session 2
 - iv. 4:15pm . 5pm Session 3
 - v. 5pm . Dismissal
- c. **Rooms in which activities held are subject to change***
- d. Each session consists of 4 activities in which the participant can choose from.
- e. Each activity has a capacity of 30 participants
- f. Participants will receive STEM . related activities, Literacy activities, structured & unstructured physical activity, academic enrichment, arts, and leadership activities
 - i. Stem activities include: robotics, Digital Media Arts: Film & Photography
 - ii. Literacy activities include: Creative Writing, Poetry, Cartooning
 - iii. Physical Recreation activities include: Volleyball, Flag Football, Wrestling, Basketball Soccer and Mix Sports
 - iv. Leadership activities include: SONYC Challenge & Life Skills
 - v. Academic Assistance/Enhancement activities include: Study Lab, Group Tutoring and AP Test Prep for 8th graders
 - vi. Arts activities include : Dance, Songwriting, Vocals, Fine Arts

13. What type of snack is provided?

- a. Snack is provided by the Department of Education Food Services. Students will receive Hot meal service. Monthly Snack Menu can be found at: http://www.schoolfoodnyc.org/public/PDF_Handler.ashx?t=m&id=3644&name=After+School+Hot+Menu
- b. September's Menu includes: Pizza , Calzones, Turkey Burger, Salads, Fries, Plantains with a fruit and low fat milk or water.

14. Will activities be separated by grade?

- a. All activities will welcome 6th 7th and 8th graders to attend. We will build community and mentorship 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.

15. Where will activities take place?

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

16. 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.

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

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.

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 9, 2015 - June 24, 2016 for a total of 36 weeks
 - i. 2 cycles: September- January 29 2016, February 1, 2016 . June 26 2016.

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

- a. Generally 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. During half days, SONYC will provide programming at 11am -5:45pm. More information will be provided closer to those days.

22. May my child leave the program early?

- a. Yes. If you would like to pick up / have your child leave early we recommend your child leave no earlier than 4:15pm. This is a mid-way point in our schedule. This will allow your child to receive snack, 30 minutes of Study Lab/ or Leadership activities and 1 full hour of the activity of their choosing.
- b. If your child has a doctor's appointment, try your child may leave earlier than 4:15pm with a doctor note provided the following day.
- c. The SONYC program has a daily capacity to host 120 participants. Thus this allows students to attend at varying commitment levels (1 day 3 days 4 days etc). However as our program grows and attendance is regulated, participants who attend less frequently (i.e. 1- 2 days) may lose their program slot to students attend more frequently 3-5 days. Prior written notice will be provided to families before this is to occur.

23. May I contact my child during program hours via cellphone?

- a. We ask that you contact the SONYC office if you want to speak with your child. A quick text is not the issue. It's how students respond. We encourage you to speak with your child about calling/texting you between 2:35- 2:45 pm. During programming students are asked to communicate with staff informing them (by showing them) a text message has come from you. The SONYC staff member will ask them to go outside of the classroom to respond. SONYC's policy is that students are to put their phone away after the Snack portion of the day. If students need to contact their parent, they can ask to come to the SONYC office and use their phone or our office phone to call you.
- b. During programming, we advocate for student voice and student choice.
 - i. Students who use their phone during activities will be asked to put the phone away.
 - ii. The second time they will be asked to hand the phone to activity specialist until the end of the period.
 1. If the student refuses to give the phone to the SONYC staff member, they will be escorted to the office to speak to the director who will ask for the phone and hold the phone until the end of the day.
 - iii. If student continues to have issues using phone during programming, student's phone will be asked for and held by director until Parent picks up phone.

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

- a. During dismissal time at 5:45pm, students being picked up will be located in room 305.
 - i. Enter through Dean Street (Blue Doors) and walk up to the 3rd floor.
 - ii. SONYC staff members will ask you for ID and to sign out your child.
- b. Should you be picking your child earlier than normal dismissal time, please contact the SONYC office to locate your child at **718-330-9328 ext. 3052**.

Dismissal Procedure

At 5:35 students whom are being picked up by parents or authorized members will be taken to Room 305 and wait for parent/ guardian or authorized pick up individual to sign them out by 5:45pm.

- A. PARENTS/AUTHORIZED PICK UP MUST SHOW ID WHEN PICKING UP CHILD. AUTHORIZED PICK UP MUST BE LISTED ON EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST IN ORDER FOR CHILD TO BE RELEASED.**
- B. Dismissal is **SOLEY on DEAN STREET** after regular school hours of 2:35pm
- C. **Dismissal time is 5:45pm, Monday through Thursday and 5pm on Fridays.** Please make arrangements for your child to be picked up.