



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

## Sen. Espaillat, Council Member Rodriguez & Local Education Professionals Protest Major Layoffs

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT October 6, 2011

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Planned cuts of over 700 positions will disproportionately hurt workers from communities of color, particularly in Northern Manhattan

New York State Senator Adriano Espaillat (D – Manhattan/Bronx) and Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez were joined by school aides and coordinators as well as local parents and other educational activists in demonstrating against planned layoffs that will target over 700 positions in the New York City school system. The aides are crucial to student success, ranging from the classroom to the cafeteria and the play ground. Their

layoffs will disproportionately affect communities of color and areas like Northern Manhattan.

“Our children deserve the best education possible. Laying off over 700 aides and assistants who are key to student success is a recipe for disaster,” said Senator Adriano Espaillat. “We are also concerned about the fact that these layoffs will disproportionately affect minority communities, where many of these aides come from. Communities like Northern Manhattan simply cannot afford to lose these jobs and our schools cannot afford to lose the help. Our school aides, coordinators, and assistants deserve our gratitude, not pink slips.”

The 700 positions targeted for cuts include school aides, health aides, parent coordinators, and family and community assistants. The workers belong to Local 372, which represents employees in the New York City public school system.

"Most of these job losses would be felt in East New York, Brownsville, Williamsburg, Washington Heights, Rockaway, South Jamaica and the South Bronx. These communities are already in need of enhanced social services and are suffering with higher unemployment rates," stated Local 372 President Santos Crespo. "The economic sense in laying off city workers does not add up. Our children, our teachers and our communities deserve better. We will not go away silently."

Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez said: "While the elimination of 700 school aide positions in our city are bad enough, it's even worse that the districts hardest hit and those with the greatest need. In Northern Manhattan, many of our students are learning English as a second language, and the workers in these positions play a critical support role for these students. By cutting these jobs, the Department of Education is telling our students that we're not willing to make an investment in them. I'm standing with Local 372 and the parents of our community today to say that we need to make these investments now, because our students deserve every advantage they can possibly have" said Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez.

Council Member Robert Jackson said: “I question the Mayor’s priorities. He makes budget cuts to school aides who do so much to create a smoothly functioning learning environment; at the same time, he gives teachers brand new iPads to record data during guided reading groups. The kids need school aides and the aides, many of whom live right here in the Heights, need to keep working to make our schools safe places to eat, play and learn.”