



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
**PROPOSAL TO REPURPOSE UNDERUTILIZED COMMUNITY SPACES INTO  
VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS**

**Challenge:**

Many affordable housing developments around New York State are currently underutilizing community and common spaces as a result of precautionary measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic as existing staffing was insufficient monitor and disinfect these spaces.

**The Community Classrooms Program** will provide students living in affordable housing developments, where school districts are operating remotely, access to structured secure classroom stations with access to the buildings existing common WiFi network. The New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAH) seeks grant funding in an amount needed to support additional staffing, cleaning measures, and other operational overhead costs to administer the program.

**Programming steps:**

- Identify underutilized community spaces in buildings regulated by NYS HCR;
- Prioritize family developments including 2 and 3 bedroom units in high poverty areas where school districts have instituted remote or hybrid learning methods due to COVID-19;
- Provide supervised community room access to socially distanced learning stations that are already WiFi enabled. *Note:* capacity constraints will be determined by socially distanced occupancy guidelines as recommended by the NYS Dept. of Health and NYS Dept. of Education and are dependent on room size;
- Site facilitators will be expected to schedule student access in two hour periods of time for 8-hours (8am to 4pm) each school day for a starting period of three months.

**Estimated cost:**

Costs to run the program at each site are estimated to be \$10,000 for the grant period (12 weeks); which includes a minimum \$15 hourly salary (local hires preferred) for 40-hour base work week, plus \$1,000 estimate for cleaning costs and operational/administrative expenditures.

**Duties of the facilitator:**

- The facilitator will work to maximize use of the space to accommodate as many of the students who need access as possible for each site;

*Example: Students residing in Building A sign up for 2-hour shifts during periods of high demand allowing for increased access to the community space throughout the school day.*

- The facilitator will clean and sanitize the learning stations between uses and monitor compliance with social distancing protocols.

**Open issues to be resolved:**

- Final analysis of total number of sites to be served;
- Assessment of detailed administrative costs and final budget;
- Method for prioritizing scheduling in the event of excess demand.