

Transcript: Mayor Bill De Blasio Appoints Richard Buery as Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives

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Mayor: Good morning, everyone. I want to start by thanking and acknowledging - wait, it's always one co-chair is here and the other isn't - thanking and acknowledging all of the folks who have done so much to build out this administration. Starting with our First Deputy Mayor, Tony Shorris; my chief of staff, Laura Santucci; and our transition co-chairs, Jennifer Jones Austin and Carl Weisbrod. The group has put just endless effort into finding the right people and making sure that the values we hold are exemplified in the people that we chose. Also, someone who gives me advice from time to time - our first lady, Chirlane McCray, is here, who I know is very enthusiastic about today's appointment. So let me talk about the appointment at hand and then at the end I will give a little weather update as well.

So, every time we gather together to make appointments, to build this administration, I talk about the values that we believe in. We work every day to create an administration that is progressive, that reflects New York City and all the people in New York City, and that is effective and experienced. And once again we have hit the mark with this appointment. We search for people who are truly committed to our progressive agenda and have a vision of how to implement it. And so many of the things that we aim to do will change the lives of the people of the city for the better, but they're not easy to do. And, in fact, they don't fall within the traditional boundaries of government agencies in many cases. Let's take the most obvious example there is - our effort to provide full day pre-K for every child in the city and after school for every middle school student. That involves the Department of Education, that involves the Administration for Children's Services, that involves DYCD, and other agencies as well. That kind of effort requires leadership from City Hall to make sure that the effort is fast and effective and reaches the people we seek to reach. And that kind of leadership has been something we've focused on from the beginning. And that's why we're welcoming a new member of our team today - Richard Buery, who will serve as Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives. It's a new post we're creating to implement some of our most important agenda items and most ambitious priorities.

To begin with, Richard will focus on the effort to achieve the plan to fund full day pre-K and quality after-school programs for middle school kids, and that will obviously involve a lot of work here and in Albany. And upon achieving the funding, Richard will lead the effort to implement pre-K and after school working closely with the three agencies I've mentioned and others. He will also begin our effort to create 100 community schools city-wide in high need neighborhoods to make sure we are supporting every aspect of our children's lives and our family's lives - and this is a model that's proven to be extraordinarily effective. Some people refer to the community schools model as the Cincinnati model - I think Richard and others at the

Children's Aid Society would say it's the Children's Aid Society model that Cincinnati took and built upon rightfully. And I have seen what's happened with community schools in the Children's Aid Society model - it's extraordinary. I've been to Cincinnati and seen what it looks like applied on a bigger scale - and that's extraordinary. And so no one's in a better position to realize this community school vision than someone who's already been working to make it a reality here in our city.