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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

In Response to NYT Report Detailing how Shelter Operators Quickly Established Reliable Internet Service for Residents, Legal Aid and Milbank LLP Call on City to Follow Suit

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society and Milbank LLP, in response to a *New York Times* [report](#) detailing how homeless shelter providers have quickly established reliable internet access at their respective facilities, called on the City to follow suit and accelerate its installation timeline to serve families and students adapting to remote learning in City schools.

Bronxworks, HELP USA and other shelter operators have mitigated the broadband divide by initiating their own installations earlier during the pandemic. Mayor Bill de Blasio has previously stated that the City wouldn't be able to complete this task until the summer.

In November, Legal Aid and Milbank LLP filed a lawsuit, [E.G. et al v. City of New York et. al.](#), on behalf of the Coalition for the Homeless and certain individual shelter residents and their children against the de Blasio Administration for its failure to provide students who reside in City shelters access to reliable internet service so they can attend school remotely.

Students in shelters have been struggling with virtual learning due to lack of WiFi or other reliable internet access in the shelter system.

“While the City drags its feet, other providers have stepped up to quickly equip their facilities with working internet so families can access the virtual classroom,” said **Susan Horwitz, Supervising Attorney of the Education Law Project at The Legal Aid Society**. “This is further confirmation that contrary to the City’s claim, installation of fast, reliable internet can indeed be completed on an accelerated schedule. Mayor de Blasio must be willing to change course and throw the entire weight of the City behind this effort as his current plan only exacerbates the stark education inequities that plague so many of our clients in the shelter system.”

“The City has long claimed that they’re moving as fast as humanly possible. The Times report shows that’s just false,” said **Grant Mainland, a litigation partner at Milbank LLP**. “And instead of pivoting to a quicker and more effective solution, the City has now sought to kick the case out of federal court, doubling down on their

strategy of delay and deflection. We urge the City to abandon this adversarial strategy and engage with us on a quick solution.”

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org