

## **Edible Schoolyard NYC and Bubble Foundation to Merge**

*Leading to one stronger organization, better positioned to bring nutrition and wellness education to more New York City students*

NEW YORK, September 20, 2018 – Edible Schoolyard NYC and the Bubble Foundation, two nonprofit organizations bringing innovative nutrition education programs to New York City schools for more than eight years, today announced their intention to merge the Bubble program into Edible Schoolyard NYC’s existing operations. The merger will significantly increase Edible Schoolyard NYC’s partner school network and bolster its goal to provide nutrition education to more underserved New York City public school students.

In NYC, nearly one in four children is food insecure, 40% of elementary school children are overweight, and 94% of children don’t eat enough vegetables in a day. These issues disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color, perpetuating an unjust and inequitable food system. Edible Schoolyard NYC and Bubble have worked independently to provide nutrition and wellness education and programming in these underserved communities, and to engage families and school communities in healthy behaviors. Given these synergies and the rapidly expanding landscape of nutrition education providers, combining the two organizations is a logical and exciting step forward.

“Edible Schoolyard NYC’s new strategic plan calls for expanding our reach so more NYC students and families receive meaningful nutrition and wellness education,” stated John Lyons, Board Chair of Edible Schoolyard NYC. “With this merger, which combines Edible Schoolyard NYC’s resources, expertise, and in-depth service model with Bubble’s proven curriculum and broad network of schools, we are poised to do just that. We are honored to build on Bubble’s legacy, helping us fuel our next stage of growth.”

The combined organization, which will operate under the Edible Schoolyard NYC name, will have a network of 23 New York City public schools. Edible Schoolyard NYC will spend the next year working with its staff, board, and other stakeholders to determine the best way to fully integrate the Bubble schools into the organization.

“Since we started the Bubble Foundation in 2010, our mission has been to partner with schools to foster healthy lifestyles for children through nutrition and wellness education for the whole school community,” stated Amy Nauiokas, Bubble Foundation Co-Founder and Board Chair. “By joining Edible Schoolyard NYC, we will accelerate that mission and, together, empower more children to live healthy and happy lives.”

Amy Nauiokas will be working closely with John Lyons to provide a smooth transition of leadership and opportunity. Lizzie Redman, who served as Bubble’s Executive Director, will be joining Edible Schoolyard NYC’s Program Advisory Committee to ensure continuity of the program.

“It is a great day for New Yorkers when two important, mission-driven organizations see a higher value in the sum of their parts and come together to serve their community jointly,” stated Barbara Turk, New York City’s Director of Food Policy. “Congratulations Edible Schoolyard NYC and Bubble, who in combining their efforts to improve the lives and well-being of thousands of children, will strengthen the impact of their programs and continue to make a meaningful difference in future generations’ relationships with health and food.”

The merger is expected to be completed later in the fall.

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## **About Edible Schoolyard NYC**

Edible Schoolyard NYC's mission is to support edible education for every child in New York City. The organization partners with New York City public schools to cultivate healthy students and communities through hands-on cooking and gardening education, transforming children's relationship with food. Inspired by the philosophy and model of Edible Schoolyard Berkeley and its founder, acclaimed restaurateur and food activist Alice Waters, Edible Schoolyard NYC was founded in 2010 to serve the specific needs of students in historically underserved NYC public schools. Since its inception, Edible Schoolyard NYC has grown from offering one program in one school in one neighborhood, to offering four programs in seven schools throughout NYC. Edible Schoolyard NYC provides direct service to 4,000 students and 525 educators and administrators, who in turn reach another 394,350 students indirectly. Edible Schoolyard NYC's vision is that all children are educated and empowered to make healthy food choices for themselves, their communities, and their environment, actively achieving a just and sustainable food system for all.

## **About Bubble Foundation**

Established in 2010, Bubble began as a small organization seeking to make a significant difference in one school in the South Bronx. Since that first successful program, Bubble's reach has grown exponentially, providing 16 underserved schools and over 8,500 children in New York City with our proven curriculum in nutrition and wellness. New York City public schools, where 40% of kids in grades K-8 are overweight or obese, face a public health crisis. Unfortunately, schools, where children eat up to three meals a day, face limited resources and knowledge to address this crisis. Through a two-year commitment, Bubble partners with schools free of charge to incorporate strong wellness programming and policies into their curriculum and culture, building a foundation for healthy schools that empower healthy kids. Bubble focuses on all aspects of healthy schools – from access to food and fitness, to education in the classroom, to parent and community engagement. As of fall 2018, the Bubble Foundation will no longer operate as a separate organization, and its programming will be implemented by Edible Schoolyard NYC.