



Open Call: 2026 PASEsetter Youth Performance

Submission Deadline: December 3, 2025 | **Submission Link:** bit.ly/2026pasesetteryouthperf

On **Wednesday, February 25, 2026** at Cipriani 42nd Street in New York City, **the Partnership for After School Education (PASE)** will host our annual **PASEsetter Awards Benefit**, honoring afterschool educators whose commitment, energy and creativity have had an indelible impact on the children and youth of New York City.

We expect over four hundred people – representatives from the corporate, higher education, media, academic, government, and philanthropic sectors, as well as PASE network practitioners and the PASE Board of Directors – to join in this special celebration and honor five of the city's most innovative and effective afterschool educators.

One highlight of this joyous, celebratory event is an **opening youth performance**. Over the years, many New York City youth groups have taken centerstage, kicking off the evening by showcasing their talent. Past performances have highlighted many genres of music and performance, demonstrating how afterschool programs provide transformative spaces where young people can explore and master new skills.

For our 2026 event, we are thrilled to do our first-ever **Youth Performance Open Call!** Based on the response to this open call, the PASEsetter Planning Team will review all submissions, follow-up with finalists, and confirm the chosen performance by January 15, 2026.

Event Details

- **Event Date and Location:** February 25, 2026 @ Cipriani 42nd St (110 E 42nd St)
- **Performance Time:** Approx 7:10PM
 - o **Pre-Event Practice & Sound Check with Venue A/V:** 4:00PM
- **Audience:** We expect 400-500 afterschool and education supporters and leaders, representatives from the corporate, higher education, media, academic, government, and philanthropic sectors.
- **Event & Performance Goal:** For many guests, this gala is an opportunity to witness the unique power of afterschool learning spaces firsthand – and the youth performance puts youth at the centerstage.
- **Compensation:** \$1000 honorarium, and a pre-performance dinner will be provided for youth & group leaders.

What We're Looking For

- **Performance Tone:** We are looking for a joyful, energetic, and attention-grabbing performance that will serve as the formal transition from our cocktail hour to the seated program.
- **Length:** 3-4 minutes – *a tight performance is key to creating an energetic start to the evening and keeping to our overall event run of show.*
- **Venue & stage:** Cipriani 42nd Street has a raised 24 ft wide, 12 ft deep, 2.8 ft high stage, with multiple screens for visibility.
- **A/V:** The venue A/V team coordinates with the PASE team on run of show, screens, and mics to ensure seamless A/V experience.
- **Pre-Event Communications and Logistics:** We anticipate that the youth group leader will have 1-2 brief planning calls with the PASEsetter team in January and February to discuss performance vision, youth coordination (media releases, transportation, etc), and A/V details. The youth group leader is responsible for

gathering media release forms and handing them off to the PASE team (1-2 weeks prior to the event) and coordinating the group's travel to the venue.

Submission Components & Instructions

- **Deadline:** December 3, 2025
- **Format & components:** You can submit via this Jotform: <https://bit.ly/2026pasesetteryouthperf>. Components of the application will include:
 - Organization Information
 - Program or Performance Group Background, including past performances & sample videos
 - Proposed Performance Vision, including short description
 - Youth Group Coordinator Information

Questions? Please contact Delia Kim Sorto, PASE Senior Program Director, dkim@pasesetter.org

FAQs & Tips from Past Performances

Is there a specific genre for the proposed performance?

We are accepting submissions from a variety of performing arts genres. One pro-tip: over the years, we have found that performances with attention grabbing audio components can be particularly successful given that the youth performance comes right after 400-500 guests transition from cocktail hour to the seated dinner.

What is the ideal group size?

We have found in the past that the dance groups of no more than 10 students and musical groups of no more than 8 students (with instruments) tend to work best given the size of the stage.

Do you have sample videos of past youth performances?

Absolutely! Check out [this video of the 2024 performance \(Police Athletic League\)](#) or [this video of the 2022 performance \(FYI Samba\)](#) for some inspiration.

Are there any eligibility criteria?

Youth performance groups should be based within the five boroughs of New York City and should consist of middle and high school aged youth.

What are the selection criteria?

Submissions will be reviewed based on artistic quality, alignment with event tone and the placement within the run of show, feasibility within time/stage constraints.