

Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs Help Young People Thrive

It is well documented that far too many students are struggling with academics, mental well-being, and school attendance. Afterschool and summer learning programs offer critical support to address these challenges while helping students build the skills they need to succeed in school and life.

Demand for afterschool programs remains high, with parents of nearly 30 million young people seeking access to programs. At the same time, many providers face staffing shortages, rising costs, and challenges accessing sustainable funding. Local afterschool and summer learning programs provided by school and community-based providers need increased federal funding to help ensure quality afterschool and summer programs remain available.

1

Invest an additional \$750 million in 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) in FY 2027 to bring total funding to \$2.1 billion and reach 750,000 more students with high-quality, locally run afterschool, before-school, and summer learning programs. While 21st CCLC currently serves nearly 1.4 million students, demand for programs continues to grow. Increasing 21st CCLC funding is critical to address rising program costs and represents a down payment on future investments that are needed to accelerate learning and support student well-being. Program providers need reliable funding, without administrative delays, pauses, or freezes, to ensure consistent access for families and students. 21st CCLC empowers states to administer grants and award funding to local communities where it is most needed. Students who regularly participate in 21st Century Community Learning Centers show improved attendance, class participation and behavior, and reading and math achievement. Consistent afterschool participation has been shown to narrow academic achievement gaps between high- and low-income students.

2

Increase federal funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to ensure greater access to quality school-age care. 44% percent of children served through the Child Care and Development Fund are school-aged, including those who participate in afterschool and summer learning programs. Research published in the January/February 2020 volume of Child Development found that children who participated in both quality early child care and afterschool programs saw a positive cumulative effect on their academic achievement in math and reading at age 15. Greater investments in school-age child care, which can help improve access, affordability, and quality supports, including those that support the school-age workforce, are critical to meeting the needs of children and families.

3

Participate in *Lights On Afterschool in October*. Thousands of events are expected to take place to celebrate the achievements and outcomes of afterschool programs. We encourage members of Congress and their staff to attend a local event in October or at another time when the member is back in the district. We are happy to follow up with additional event details.