



For Immediate Release
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Another Shocking Attack on Afterschool, Summer Learning Programs as Trump Administration Fires All Staff Who Manage Federal Initiative

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance, on the Trump Administration Firing All U.S. Department of Education Staff Who Work With Afterschool Programs

“America’s children and families, school and communities, our workforce and our economy need a robust, well-functioning 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative to support afterschool and summer learning programs across the country. This small staff at the U.S. Department of Education that has long administered these grants had a big impact, supporting an initiative that funds more than 10,000 local programs serving nearly 1.4 million children nationwide. While states run their own competitions to distribute 21st CCLC funds to programs designed by local communities, the team at the U.S. Department of Education has long provided guidance and support that is absolutely essential. Firing that team is shocking, devastating, utterly without any basis, and it threatens to cause lasting harm.

This summer, the Trump Administration withheld the FY25 afterschool and summer learning program funds Congress had appropriated, releasing them only after a massive outcry from parents, the public, and lawmakers in Congress on both sides of the aisle. Working parents in particular breathed a sigh of relief when those funds were released. And while local 21stCCLC-funded programs should continue for now, as they are supported with the prior fiscal year’s funding, it is hard to see how future grants will be successful without this essential U.S. Department of Education staff.

Afterschool programs keep students safe, inspire them to learn, and give working parents peace of mind that their kids are engaged, supervised, and learning when schools are out. 21st CCLC is the chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs and, while it falls far short of providing enough funds to meet the need for afterschool programs, it is an essential infrastructure. Without its staff, we risk having more children and youth unsupervised and at risk, more academic failures, more hungry kids, more chronic absenteeism, higher dropout rates, more parents forced out of their jobs, a less STEM-ready and successful workforce, and a child care crisis that is even worse. These firings threaten children, youth, working families, and our future.”

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.