



For Immediate Release
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Congress Increases Funding for Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs – a Welcome Step Forward, But Not Nearly Enough to Meet the Need

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

“Last night, Congress gave the country’s students, families, schools and communities a significant boost by including a \$30 million increase for the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) in the FY2022 federal budget. This will allow the chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs to support programs that serve approximately 30,000 more students, providing them with homework help, hands-on learning opportunities, engagement in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and physical fitness, access to mentors, college and careers, and more. Children and youth need these programs, now more than ever, after a pandemic that left many isolated and disengaged.

Prior to this increase, 21st CCLC was able to serve 1.56 million students at more than 10,469 sites across the country each year. The new federal funding total for this vitally important initiative is \$1.289 billion, which is an all-time high. However, the final budget is not nearly enough to meet the demand for quality afterschool and summer learning programs – especially at this time when the costs associated with offering high quality afterschool and summer opportunities have risen.

Even before the pandemic, for every child in an afterschool program in this country, three more were waiting to get in, with [the families of 24.6 million children](#) unable to access an afterschool program. Low-income, Black and Latinx families are most likely to be left behind. So, while this increase is a terrific step, there is much more to do. Millions of children will still be without the afterschool and summer learning programs their parents know they need.

We thank House Appropriations Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Senate Appropriations Chairman Patrick Leahy, the members of both Committees, as well as House Afterschool Caucus co-chairs Representative David Cicilline and Don Young and Senate Afterschool Caucus co-chairs Senators Tina Smith and Lisa Murkowski, and House and Senate leadership for their commitment to making afterschool and summer learning programs available to all. The afterschool community will work hard to convince lawmakers to further increase funding for 21st CCLC, because our country’s children and youth deserve a much greater federal investment in the programs proven to help them succeed in school and in life.”

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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.