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Trump Proposal to End Afterschool Funding a 'Betrayal of Children, Families, Communities'

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

“The Trump administration’s call for zero funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) afterschool initiative is a betrayal of the millions of students and parents who depend on afterschool and summer learning programs. This proposal would devastate working families. It is painfully short-sighted and makes a mockery of the President’s promise to make our country safer and to support inner cities and rural communities alike.

This proposal would result in far fewer programs, diminished program offerings, and gutting of the infrastructure that leverages support for afterschool and summer learning programs from local museums, businesses, colleges and others. Afterschool programs make it possible for many parents to work; losing their afterschool programs would jeopardize their ability to hold onto their jobs.

Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. That’s a lesson every administration and every Congress has understood since the 21st CCLC initiative launched in the 1990s. Today’s lawmakers must understand it, too. We intend to work with lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle, some of whom have also reached out to us expressing concern because they, too, recognize that children, families, businesses and our economy need quality afterschool programs to continue helping students succeed in school and in life. These programs do this by providing homework help, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education, mentoring, physical activities, healthy meals and snacks, robotics, computer programming, college- and job-readiness, opportunities for hands-on learning and much more.

The current federal investment in afterschool is modest, but it is absolutely vital to families and communities across the country, supporting afterschool for [1.6 million](#) children. Still, for every child now in an afterschool program, two more are waiting to get in. At this time when one in five children in this country is unsupervised after the school day ends, we should be investing much more in afterschool programs, not cutting the funding we have.

If our children are to learn, if our working families are to prosper, if our workforce is to become more competitive, if our economy is to thrive, if our communities are to become safer, we need many more quality afterschool and summer learning programs in this country. The Trump budget proposal released today would take us in exactly the wrong direction.”

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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.