



**STATEMENT OF JUDY Y. SAMELSON**  
Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance  
Regarding Phase Two of the Mathematica Study on  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Afterschool Programs  
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## **More of the Same**

### ***Phase Two of Mathematica Afterschool Study Yields Little Information That is Reliable or New, Afterschool Expert Says***

“Phase Two of the federal evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative is old news about an old program that no longer exists. Conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the U.S. Department of Education, the information Mathematica released today will not be any surprise, and will be of little help, to the afterschool community, especially given that the data were collected more than two years ago and the program has changed dramatically since then.

Not a single program funded since the No Child Left Behind Act made major changes to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative is included in the study released today. Experts raised many methodological concerns about the first phase of Mathematica’s controversial afterschool study, and several apply to this phase as well. They include, but are not limited to:

- Middle school “treatment” and “comparison” groups were different in significant ways, because comparison students had higher test scores and higher socioeconomic status. Despite attempts to adjust for these differences, contrasts between the two groups are deeply suspect.
- Middle school comparison students participated in afterschool programs not funded by 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grants and significant crossover occurred, again casting great doubt on the study’s conclusions.
- To be included in the study, elementary afterschool programs had to have sizeable waiting lists. Most do not. Thus, participating programs differed significantly from the norm.

It is no wonder that numerous experts have raised significant methodological and other concerns about the study, including Mathematica’s own Technical Work Group of advisors, highly regarded researchers who have studied afterschool for decades, and Members of Congress knowledgeable about afterschool.

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Add One, Samelson

Afterschool programs enjoy overwhelming public support because Americans know they keep kids safe, help working families, and inspire children to learn. A household survey released in May by the Afterschool Alliance and supported by The JCPenney Afterschool Fund found that 14.3 million care for themselves after the school day ends. The parents of more than 15 million children say their children would participate if an afterschool program were available.

Those are among the reasons that, last year, a Republican-led Congress repudiated the Administration's effort to use the first phase of the Mathematica afterschool study to justify debilitating cuts to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative. Since that time, the U.S. Department of Education has undertaken sweeping new efforts aimed at discovering what is working well in afterschool programs, so they can contribute even more to America's youth and their families.

Last weekend, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger joined the Afterschool Alliance in kicking off *Lights On Afterschool*, a national rally for afterschool that this year will involve hundreds of thousand of people at more than 6,000 events across the nation. We invite the Administration to work with us to make afterschool available to all and to close the funding gap between the \$2 billion promised in the No Child Left Behind Act for fiscal year 2005 and the \$1 billion in the current budget.

Together we must ensure that every child is safe and supervised, with opportunities to learn, in the afternoons. Let's work together to get to the day when every family has access to an afterschool program."

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*The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*