



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**This Is The Support America's Children and Families Need, Afterschool Leader Says,
Lauding Final Passage of American Rescue Plan**

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

“Our country’s students, families, schools and our economy will be better off because Congress completed its work on the American Rescue Plan today, sending President Biden a strong package that will provide the boost children and families need. Millions of our children are suffering academically, socially and emotionally from extreme isolation and unprecedented stress, and students from low-income families are in greatest peril. This package will help them heal, recover and take advantage of learning recovery resources. We are thrilled it recognizes the instrumental role afterschool programs play in our children’s learning and development

The American Rescue Plan will make \$8.45 billion available at the state level and \$21.9 billion at the local level for afterschool and summer learning programs, supporting programs serving nearly 9 million students. It begins to address the chronic underfunding that has [denied millions of children](#), many of them students of color, programs that help them succeed in school and in life.

Over the past year, afterschool programs have been unsung heroes of the pandemic. Many have remained open, serving the children of first responders and essential workers. Many created all-day virtual studies and delivered meals, lesson plans and school supplies. Staff checked in with struggling students virtually or in-person. And programs connected families at risk for hunger, homelessness and lack of health care with essential supports.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we must give all students access to afterschool and summer learning programs, many of which partner with museums, colleges, businesses, non-profits, camps, and faith-based partners to make learning fun and help students explore their passions, do team-based projects, and engage with caring mentors. These funds will help make that possible and pave the way for community learning ecosystems that bring the best resources in every community to support our children, youth and families.

The afterschool community thanks Senators Bennet (D-Col.), Murkowski (R-Alaska), Murphy (D-Conn.), Murray (D-Wash.), Sanders (I-Vt.), and Smith (D-Minn.); and Representatives Bonamici (D-Ore.), Cicilline (D-R.I.), Courtney (D-Conn.), DeLauro (D-Conn.), Evans (D-Penn.), Fitzpatrick (R-Penn.), Kildee (D-Mich.), Scott (D-Va.), Van Drew (R- N.J.), Wild (D-Penn.), and Young (R-Alaska) for supporting these provisions in the legislation. We applaud the funds the American Rescue Plan directs to food and nutrition assistance, disabled and homeless students, our child care system, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the National Service Trust. This legislation will provide what America’s children and families need.”

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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.