



For Immediate Release
September 16, 2020

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202/371-1999

House Passage of 21st Century Community Learning Centers Coronavirus Relief Act a ‘Wise and Welcome Move that Will Help Students and Families Nationwide,’ Afterschool Leader Says, Urging Congress to Make Emergency Appropriation for Out-Of-School-Time Programs this Year

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

“At a time when America’s families are struggling like never before with the pandemic and the school closures and adjustments it has forced, the House of Representatives took a badly needed, common-sense step today by passing the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020 with bipartisan support. This was a wise and welcome move that can help millions of students and families – if the U.S. Senate passes the bill as well.

Meeting the dual imperatives to protect our health *and* educate our children is an enormous challenge. Many parents are finding it nearly impossible to supervise their children’s virtual schooling while also hanging onto or finding the jobs they need to support their families. This bill would allow out-of-school-time programs to do more to help families meet these unprecedented challenges by stepping in to keep kids safe and help them learn during the hours, days and weeks when schools are physically closed. It would do that by allowing 21st CCLC-funded programs to carry out activities in-person or virtually during school hours or when school is not in session; and provide in-person care to support student learning during virtual school days.

With COVID-19 affecting just about everyone, demand has grown for afterschool and summer learning programs and the costs to run them safely are rising sharply as well. We urge the U.S. Department of Education to expedite its waiver process to provide flexibility to local 21st CCLC-funded programs. Furthermore, we call on the U.S. Senate to join the House in passing the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Coronavirus Relief Act, and both chambers to appropriate an extra, one-time \$6.2 billion boost in 21st CCLC funding to ensure out-of-school-time programs can do all they can to help families during this difficult time. Students and families need and deserve this support.”

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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.