



Afterschool Alliance

AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL

November 26, 2008

TO: Kris Gutierrez, Geri Palast and Parag Mehta

FR: Jodi Grant, Jen Rinehart and Erika Argersinger

RE: Expanding and Improving Afterschool Opportunities for Children

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us to discuss afterschool programs and the current challenges and opportunities for increasing access to high quality programs. We enjoyed sharing some of the data and research that shows how quality afterschool programs are changing the lives of children, families and communities. We also look forward to working with you to increase access and knowledge about afterschool programs - we believe that they are essential to today's working families, but even more important, they are critical in teaching the skills our children and youth need to succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy.

The following are recommendations for improving and expanding the federal investment and engagement in afterschool opportunities in the short and long term, as well as in the context of reauthorizing *No Child Left Behind*. More details on our NCLB recommendations can be found in the *Updated NCLB Recommendations* attachment.

Short Term - increase investments in established programs in order to take advantage of existing infrastructure

- Fully fund the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC). The program is currently funded at \$1.1 billion, less than half of the full authorization level of \$2.5 billion. The current funding level provides afterschool for approximately 1 million children and youth and leaves millions of additional children unsupervised each day.
- Increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant.
- Fund the Summer Term Education Programs for Upward Performance Act (STEP UP).
- Ensure that school construction efforts give priority or preference to those that include space(s) for afterschool and community learning programs.

Mid Term

- Include pilot funding for After School Partnerships Improve Results in Education (ASPIRE) Act (H.R. 6928) in U.S. Department of Education budget.
- Include pilot funding for Teaching Fellows for Expanded Learning and After-School (T-FELAS) Act (S. 778) in U.S. Department of Education budget.
- Increase funding for Full Service Community Schools demonstration project in U.S. Department of Education budget.
- Create a White House Office of National Youth Policy, as envisioned in the Federal Youth Coordination Act (H.R. 7004), to ensure the coordination and effectiveness of services to youth.



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Long Term

- Rethink how, when and where children use their time for learning and make fundamental changes to educating children, incorporating the afterschool approach. This includes tailoring academic instruction to meet the needs, abilities and learning styles of students; employing a variety of engaging, relevant activities that are project or community-based; embedding learning in real world settings; and building partnerships among schools, community-based organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations and other members of the community in order to bring about diverse learning opportunities and diverse people guiding those opportunities. See TIME Act (S. 3431) and A New Day for Learning for more details.
- Rethink assessment and accountability to move beyond test scores and include 21st century skills, as well as behavioral and social measures.

Reauthorizing *No Child Left Behind*

- Increase authorized funding for 21st CCLC, starting with \$2.5 billion for FY 2009 and increasing by increments of \$250,000,000 each year to \$3.75 billion in FY 2014.
- Enhance sustainability of programs by giving states flexibility to make 21st CCLC grants renewable based on performance.
- Increase quality by giving states the option to expand the 21st CCLC Training & Technical Assistance set-aside up to 5% to improve quality and availability of services. These increased resources could be used to address infrastructure and capacity needs such as professional development.
- Strengthen accountability by broadening the 21st CCLC's goals and evaluation measures to more accurately reflect the range of impacts on children's academic, social and behavioral development.
- Make better use of Supplemental Education Services (SES) dollars. At a minimum, improve quality and delivery of Supplemental Education Services by making these funds more accessible to comprehensive afterschool programs.
- Create a new afterschool initiative for secondary school students that complements the learning day with afterschool programs that engage the broader community in teaching and learning. See ASPIRE Act (H.R. 6928) for more details.