



NEWS RELEASE
February 26, 2014

CONTACT: [Gretchen Wright](mailto:Gretchen.Wright@afterschoolalliance.org)
202/371-1999

Nation's Leading Afterschool Advocacy Organization Lauds Kildee's Introduction of 'Afterschool for America's Children Act'

WASHINGTON, DC – The nation's leading afterschool advocacy organization today hailed U.S. Representatives Dan Kildee (D-MI) and Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) for introducing the "Afterschool for America's Children Act," HR 4086. The legislation would reauthorize and strengthen the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative—the nation's chief federal funding stream for afterschool programs—by supporting innovative advances taking root in before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs.

"Quality afterschool programs do a tremendous amount to support families, schools and communities," said Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance. "These programs are a wise investment because they keep children and youth safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. We are very proud to support this bill and its bipartisan companion bill in the Senate, and deeply appreciative of the leadership provided by Rep. Kildee and Rep. DeLauro. The support for this legislation is as broad and deep as the support for afterschool programs, and we will encourage lawmakers to make its passage a high priority."

The bill would:

- Strengthen school-community partnerships to include sharing of data and resources, the ability to better leverage relationships within the community and provide an intentional alignment with the school day.
- Encourage innovative new ways to engage students in learning that looks different from a traditional school day, with an emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning; science, technology, engineering and math; social and emotional learning; and physical activity and nutrition education. It supports approaches that focus on individualized learning that provide a variety of ways for students to master core skills and knowledge.
- Provide accountability measures that are connected to college- and career-readiness goals and show student progress over time toward meeting indicators of student success, including school attendance, grades and on-time grade level advancement.
- Ensure that funding supports programs that utilize evidence-based, successful practices.
- Increase quality and accountability through parent engagement, better alignment with state learning objectives and coordination between federal, state and local agencies.
- Does not prioritize one model of expanded learning opportunities over another.
- Promote professional development and training for afterschool program staff.
- Maintain formula grants to states that then distribute funds to local school-community partnerships through a competitive grant process.

A significant and growing body of research demonstrates that students who attend 21st CCLC afterschool programs regularly are more likely to improve their grades, tests scores and overall academic behavior. More than 15 million school-age children – more than one in four U.S. children – are unsupervised after the school day ends. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs, if such programs were available to them. Too often, due to funding shortfalls, there are no programs available to students and families that need them.

A summary of the legislation is [available here](#).

###

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.