

afterschool WORKS!



Despite resounding and compelling calls for support, for the fourth year in a row, the current administration's budget proposes eliminating the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative—a dedicated federal funding stream supporting local afterschool and summer learning programs. Without targeted federal funding, 1.7 million students will lose their local afterschool and summer programs and the impact will be devastating to local communities. We respectfully request the following of Congress:

1

Protect and increase funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative to \$1.35 billion—an increase of \$100 million over the current level. This would provide access to quality afterschool, before-school, and summer learning opportunities for an additional 100,000 students across all 50 states. While 21st CCLC currently serves 1.7 million students, 10 million additional low-income students would participate in afterschool programs if they had access to a program. Increasing 21st CCLC funding will be a down payment on future investment to begin to meet the tremendous need for quality afterschool and summer learning programs. Students who regularly participate in 21st Century Community Learning Centers improve their school attendance, class participation and behavior, homework completion, and reading and math achievement scores and grades.

2

Maintain or increase federal funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to ensure access to quality school-age care. Roughly one-third of children served through the Child Care and Development Fund are school-aged, including those who participate in afterschool and summer learning programs. Research published in the 2020 January/February volume of Child Development found that children who participated in both quality early childcare and afterschool programs saw a positive cumulative effect on their academic achievement in math and reading at age 15.

3

Co-sponsor the bipartisan Summer Meals Act (S. 1908/HR 2818) to increase access to healthy meals during the summer and afterschool. The bill helps more children access healthy food by allowing areas with 40 percent or more of students receiving free or reduced lunch to be eligible for the summer food program, rather than the current threshold of 50 percent. This would make the meals programs consistent with the eligibility for summer learning programs provided through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative. The bill also: reduces the paperwork burden for meal program sponsors by streamlining the application process for programs operating year round; improves nutrition in rural, areas by providing transportation grants for underserved areas and offers sites the option of serving a third meal during the summer

4

Join the Afterschool Caucus and participate in Lights On Afterschool in October.

- Stand with the 100+ members of Congress who have committed to supporting afterschool, before-school, and summer learning program opportunities.
- More than 8,000 Lights On Afterschool events are expected this fall to celebrate the achievement and outcomes of afterschool programs. We encourage members and staff to attend their local event.

For more information about joining the Senate Afterschool Caucus, Congressional offices may contact Co-chairs Sen. Murkowski (Alaska) and Sen. Smith (Minn.): Brenna Barber (Brenna_Barber@smith.senate.gov) or Karen McCarthy (Karen_McCarthy@murkowski.senate.gov). For the House Afterschool Caucus, Co-Chairs Rep. Young (Alaska) and Rep. Lowey (N.Y.), contact Fae Rabin with Representative Lowey's office (Fae.Rabin@mail.house.gov).