

January 30, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

As Congress prepares to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the below signed 266 organizations **urge you to maintain the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative as a separate and specific federal funding stream for school and community partnerships to support students in grades Pre-K through 12 during the hours outside of the school day.** The undersigned local, state and national organizations strongly support maintaining and strengthening 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC to provide the next generation of before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs that keep young people safe, inspire them to learn and support working families.

For more than 15 years 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC has leveraged school and community partnerships to help millions of low-income children become engaged in their academic studies, while sparking new interests in a wide variety of topics from the sciences to theater. Authorized in Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative provides students attending high-poverty schools with academic enrichment activities; a broad array of additional services designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program, such as: hands on experiments to excite children about science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), access to physical activity, drug and violence prevention programs, formal and informal mentoring, counseling programs, art, music, opportunities to be creative and technology education programs; as well as literacy and related educational development services to the families of children who are served in the program.

A decade of research proves the wide-ranging impacts of quality afterschool and summer learning programs:

- Studies have shown that quality programs give students the academic, social and career-ready skills they need to succeed. Students who regularly attend programs have better grades and behavior in school; better peer relations and emotional well-being; and lower incidences of drug-use, violence and unintended pregnancy.
- Research in 2011 and 2012 from several state education agencies found that teachers report that students regularly participating in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers show improvements in homework completion, class participation, attendance, behavior in class, and reading and math achievement scores and grades (American Institutes for Research, 2011 & 2013; Evers, 2012).
- A separate 2013 study out of the University of California, Irvine's School of Education found that regular participation in afterschool programs helped to narrow the achievement gap between high-income and low-income students in math, improved academic and behavioral outcomes, and reduced school absences (Pierce, Auger & Vandell, 2013).
- More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college (Alexander et al, 2007). 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC supports low-income children during the summer as well as before-school and afterschool during the school year.

Now is the time to step up support for students during the time when they are not supported by school or family, the hours after school when 11.3 million children are unsupervised and juvenile crime and other inappropriate activities peak. The unmet demand for afterschool programs has steadily risen over the last 10 years to approximately 19.4 million children (41 percent) in 2014 that are not currently in an afterschool program but would be enrolled in a program if one were available

to them, according to their parents (America After 3PM, 2014). Eliminating the dedicated 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funding stream would mean most, if not all, of the funding currently supporting 1.6 million students in afterschool and summer programs is at risk of being redirected to other purposes.

Afterschool and summer learning programs can be essential partners to community schools and provide an infrastructure to bring in other resources to our children including access to mentors, tutors, nutritious snacks and meals, and in some places medical, dental and mental health programs. For-profits, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), tribal organizations, non-profits, charter schools, local governments, colleges and universities and others currently serve as critical partners and lead organizations under 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and help foster the broad positive results the program has yielded. Afterschool STEM programs play an important role in developing workforce skills and preparing a diverse range of young people to access higher education and jobs in these fields that are critical to the economic well-being of the nation. The ability of quality programs to leverage state, local and private resources, offer professional development and training to staff, and achieve desired outcomes around student success will be lost given the broadening of the funding stream and competing provisions.

We ask that the ESEA reauthorization process be used as an opportunity to maintain and strengthen 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC to enhance the quality of federally funded afterschool and summer learning programs; better emphasize science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), 21st century skills, creation and support of evidence-based mentoring relationships for children and physical activity and nutrition education; improve the manner in which the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC initiative is evaluated; and strengthen the school-community partnerships that are the hallmark of quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

CC:

Sen. Michael B. Enzi (WY)  
Sen. Richard Burr (NY)  
Sen. Johnny Isakson (GA)  
Sen. Rand Paul (KY)  
Sen. Susan Collins (ME)  
Sen. Lisa Murkowski (AK)  
Sen. Mark Kirk (IL)  
Sen. Tim Scott (SC)  
Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (UT)  
Sen. Pat Roberts (KS)  
Sen. Bill Cassidy, M.D. (LA)

Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski (MD)  
Sen. Bernard Sanders (VT)  
Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr. (PA)  
Sen. Al Franken (MN)  
Sen. Michael F. Bennet (CO)  
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (RI)  
Sen. Tammy Baldwin (WI)  
Sen. Christopher S. Murphy (CT)  
Sen. Elizabeth Warren (MA)

Sincerely,

A World Fit For Kids!  
Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK)  
Afterschool Alliance  
After-School All-Stars  
America SCORES  
American Anthropological Association  
American Heart Association  
Association of Science-Technology Centers  
Boys and Girls Clubs of America  
Campaign for Environmental Literacy  
Campaign for Youth Justice  
Candler County Family Connection  
Champions, Knowledge Universe  
Children's Home Society of America  
Coalition for Juvenile Justice  
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)  
Developmental Studies Center  
Early Autism Project  
Early Care and Education Consortium  
Ecological Society of America  
Education Development Center, Inc.  
Elev8  
Every Child Matters Education Fund  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Food Research and Action Center  
Foster Family-based Treatment Association  
Girls on the Run (GOTR)  
Girls Inc.  
Iron Will Kids  
Kids Included Together  
MENTOR  
National 4-H Council  
National Afterschool Association  
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth  
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)  
National Collaboration for Youth  
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics  
National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS)  
National Education Association  
National Farm to School Network

National Network for Youth  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National Summer Learning Association  
National Writing Project  
NIAAA (National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association)  
Oral Health America  
Save the Children  
School Nutrition Association  
STEM Education Coalition  
The Children's Aid Society  
The National Girls Collaborative  
Trust for America's Health  
United Way Worldwide  
YMCA of the USA

AK Alaska Afterschool Network  
AK Alaska Children's Trust  
AK Alaska Food Coalition  
AK Anchorage Youth Development Coalition  
AK Fairbanks After School Coalition  
AK Food Bank of Alaska  
AK Juneau Afterschool Coalition  
AK Sitka School District  
AK United Way of Anchorage  
AL Alabama Afterschool Community Network (ALACN)  
AL Alabama Community Education Association (ACEA)  
AL Alabama Math, Science, Technology, Engineering Coalition  
AL Guntersville City Schools  
AL Stevenson Middle School  
CA California School-Age Consortium  
CA Techbridge  
CO Redhouse Training and Consulting  
CT Connecticut Afterschool Network  
CT Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain, Inc.  
DC DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (DC Trust)  
FL Children's Campaign  
FL Children's Home Society of Florida  
FL Florida Afterschool Network  
GA Boys & Girls Clubs of the CSRA  
GA Boys and Girls Club of Candler County  
GA Future Foundation Inc.  
GA Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential

GA Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network  
GA Operation P.E.A.C.E., Inc.  
GA Positive Growth Inc.  
GA Reach for the Stars Program/Cobb County School District  
GA Stages Early Learning Enrichment Center  
GA Towns County School System  
GA Voices for Georgia's Children  
GA VOX Teen Communications  
IA Child and Family Policy Center  
IA Iowa Afterschool Alliance  
IA Siouxland Human Investment Partnership (SHIP)  
ID Coeur d'Alene School District  
ID Idaho Afterschool Network  
ID Idaho Hunger Task Force  
ID Marsing 21st CLCC  
IL ACT Now Coalition  
IL Brighton Park Neighborhood Council  
IL Illinois Alliance of YMCAs  
IL Chicago Youth Centers  
IL Children's Home + Aid  
IL Enlace Chicago  
IL Federation for Community Schools  
IL Metropolitan Family Services  
IL Y.O.U.  
IL Zion Elementary School District 6  
IN Indiana Afterschool Network  
IN MCCOY Inc.  
IN The Villages of Indiana  
KS Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence  
KS Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka  
KS CGS After School Program  
KS Johnson County Park & Recreation District  
KS Kansas Afterschool Network  
KS Kansas PTA  
KY Kentucky Out-of-School Alliance  
MD Advocates for Children and Youth  
MD Family League of Baltimore  
MD Girls on the Run of Montgomery County, MD  
MD Maryland Association of Local Management Boards  
MD Maryland Out of School Time (MOST)  
MD Mid-Atlantic Girls Collaborative (MAGiC)  
MD Montgomery County Collaboration Council  
MD Queen Anne's County Community Partnerships for Children

MI Michigan's Children  
MI Michigan PTA  
MI Michigan After-School Partnership  
MI Priority Children  
MN Ignite Afterschool, Minnesota's Afterschool Network  
MO Child Care Aware® of Missouri  
MO Missouri AfterSchool Network  
MO Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
MO Missouri School Age Community Coalition (MOSAC2)  
MO Science Pioneers, Inc.  
MO United 4 Children  
MO Vision for Children at Risk  
NC NC Center for Afterschool Programs  
NH New Hampshire Kids Count  
  
NH NH Afterschool Network  
NJ Impact 21 Community Development Corporation  
NJ Impact21/Destiny Afterschool Haven  
NJ New Jersey Community Development Corporation (Paterson, NJ)  
NJ NJSACC  
NJ REAL Center (Regional Enrichment & Learning Center)  
NJ Team Walker Inc.  
NM Appletree Educational Center  
NM Boys and Girls Club of Sierra County  
NM New Mexico PTA  
NM YMCA of Central New Mexico  
NY AfterSchool Works! New York  
NY Alliance of New York State YMCAs  
NY Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo  
NY Boys and Girls Club of the Northtowns  
NY Capital Region Sponsor-A-Scholar, Inc  
NY Child & Adolescent Treatment Services  
NY Child Care Resource Network  
NY ChildCare Network of the Niagara Frontier, Inc  
NY Children's Agenda  
NY Citizen Schools New York  
NY Community Action Organization (CAO) of Erie County, Inc.  
NY Comprehensive Development, Inc. (CDI)  
NY Concerned Ecumenical Ministry  
NY Early Care & Learning Council  
NY ENACT, Inc.  
NY Esperanza Preparatory Academy  
NY Gateway Youth Outreach

NY Good Shepherd Services  
NY Greater Rochester After-School Alliance  
NY Greater Southern Tier BOCES  
NY Henry Street Settlement  
NY Hornell City School District consortium  
NY Hudson Bluehawk Nation Afterschool Program  
NY Kids Creative  
NY Lt. Col. Matt Urban Human Services Center of WNY  
NY Neighborhood Family Services Coalition  
NY New York State 4-H Youth Development Program  
NY New York State Afterschool Network  
NY Northwest Buffalo Community Center  
NY Oasis Children's Services, LLC  
NY P2L: Pathways to Leadership  
NY Proaction of Steuben and Yates Inc.  
NY Say Yes Buffalo  
NY Southside Community Center  
NY St. Anne's Institute  
NY The Valley Community Association Inc.  
NY United Activities Unlimited  
NY United Neighborhood Houses  
NY United Way of Greater Rochester, Inc.  
NY Vision Education & Media - Robofun  
NY Watkins Glen Central School District  
NY Wings of Eagles Discovery Center  
NY YMCA of Hornell, New York, Inc.  
OH America SCORES Cleveland  
OH Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation  
OH College Now Greater Cleveland  
OH From Me 2 U, Inc.  
OH Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association  
OH Horizon Education Centers  
OH Ohio Afterschool Network  
OH Ohio Alliance of YMCAs  
OH Ohio Association of Child Care Providers  
OH Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association  
OH Parma Area Community/Business/School Partnership  
OH The Goddard School  
OH United Rehabilitation Services  
OH United Way of Greater Toledo  
OH University Settlement  
OH Urban League of Greater Cleveland  
OH Voices for Ohio's Children

OR Oregon Girls Collaborative Project  
OR OregonASK  
PA A+ Schools  
PA APOST (Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time)  
PA Educational Advocates Reaching Today's Hardworking Students, Inc. (EARTH)  
PA LifeSpan School and Day Care  
PA Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA  
PA Sarah Heinz House  
RI Children & Families First  
RI Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance (RIASPA)  
SC The Richard W. Riley Institute at Furman University  
TN Black Children's Institute of Tennessee (BCI)  
TN Memphis Urban League  
TN Music City (TN) Chapter, The Links Incorporated  
TN NAACP, Tennessee State Conference  
TN Raise Your Hand Tennessee  
TN Tennessee Afterschool Network  
TN United Way of Greater Knoxville  
TN United Way of Metropolitan Nashville's  
TN United Way of the Mid-South  
TN United Ways of Tennessee  
TX Engineering for Kids  
TX IT'S TIME TEXAS  
TX Texas Afterschool Association  
TX Texas Partnership for Out of School Time (TXPOST)  
UT Community Education Partnership of West Valley City, Inc.  
VA Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time (VPOST)  
VT Burlington Parks & Recreation, City of Burlington  
VT Caledonia North Supervisory Union  
VT ENCORE After School and Summer Programs  
VT Caledonia Central Supervisory Union  
VT Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union  
VT GRACE Project  
VT Grand Isle Supervisory Union  
VT Hunger Free Vermont  
VT Lamoille North Supervisory Union  
VT Open Doors in St. Albans  
VT Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union  
VT REACH! Afterschool & Summer Programs  
VT Student Success Winooski School District  
VT Unbound, the Peoples Academy Program  
VT Vermont Afterschool, Inc.  
VT Vermont Superintendents Association

VT Voices for Vermont's Children  
VT Windham Central Supervisory Union  
WA School's Out Washington  
WI Racine Unified School District Extended Learning  
WV Lincoln County 21st Century Community Learning Program  
WV Monongalia County Schools  
WV Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club  
WV PATCH  
WV Playmates Preschools and Child Development Centers  
WV Southern Appalachian Labor School (SALS)  
WV Spring Hill Elementary  
WV Wayne County 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers  
WV West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network