



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Expanding and Strengthening Afterschool and Summer Programs for Children and Youth

Opportunity

Increase the availability and improve the quality of afterschool and summer programs that expand opportunities for children and youth to learn and grow.

Rationale

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) includes significant new funding that can support and expand the availability of afterschool and summer programs for children and youth through new funding for child care, education, community service, youth training, and violence prevention. Some of these dollars will flow to cities, while others will go to states, local school districts, and nonprofits. Regardless of the recipient, city leaders can help ensure that these funds are used effectively to expand out-of-school time (OST) programs for residents.

The demand for high-quality afterschool and summer opportunities for children and youth continues to grow across the country. An estimated 14.3 million children and youth return each day to an empty home, unsupervised and with no opportunities to constructively occupy their time.

These funds can have a strong positive impact on local economies and the quality of life in cities by:

- Providing access to high-quality afterschool and summer programs that boost academic achievement and decrease the dropout rate;
- Ensuring that children and youth have the 21st century skills needed to be successful in the workforce;
- Keeping youth occupied in positive activities during the hours when unsupervised youth are most likely to engage in risky behaviors;
- Helping parents find and afford quality care for their children outside school hours so they can work or enroll in job training;
- Creating new jobs for young people and for youth development specialists;
- Encouraging collaboration between cities, schools, and community-based organizations to make maximum use of afterschool opportunities; and
- Bringing new resources into the economy.

Taking advantage of the funds provided by the ARRA legislation to support afterschool initiatives will support working families, while keeping kids safe, inspiring them to learn, and preparing them to be part of tomorrow's workforce. As program staff are paid with these federal dollars, the positive impact will be multiplied as these funds circulate through the local economy.



Cities can play a role in connecting providers with the funds available through the ARRA and showing how the bill provides an opportunity to bridge the school day and afterschool to create a seamless system of learning opportunities. Local officials are also well positioned to build new partnerships that expand the capacity of afterschool and summer providers, and can get the word out to residents so parents can take advantage of new and expanded OST opportunities. By building strong, citywide OST systems, municipal leaders can help ensure that the out-of-school hours, rather than being wasted, equip young people with the skills necessary to compete in today's knowledge and skill-based global economy.

Relevant ARRA Funding Streams

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides a total of \$787 billion in spending and tax cuts to help restart the economy. Included in the ARRA legislation are many funding sources that can be used to support afterschool and summer enrichment opportunities. City officials can help make the connection between the various funding streams in this bill and show how they can be used to support broad education reform that includes a vibrant afterschool and summer component.

- \$2 billion for Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG)
- \$5 billion for Innovation Fund and State Incentives Grants
- \$650 million for Enhancing Education through Technology Grants
- \$13 billion for Title I
- \$160 million for additional AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members
- \$1.2 billion for Workforce Investment Act/Youth Training and Employment Services
- \$2 billion for formula funded Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (Byrne-JAG) and \$225 million for competitive Byrne-JAGs

Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG)

While much of CCDBG funds provide vouchers to low-income parents for child care for children up to age 13, the state can also provide grants to child care providers to ensure that programs offer a certain number of slots for eligible families and children. A city-supported afterschool program that meets state certification requirements could qualify for these funds. Up to one-third of CCDBG subsidies may be used for school-age children. In addition, the federal government requires that a minimum of four percent of CCDBG funds, or \$255 million, be set aside for quality improvement activities, including \$93 million to improve infant and toddler care and the remainder available for preschool and school-age care programs.

Innovation Fund and State Incentives Grants

As part of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, the U.S. Department of Education will oversee two discretionary funding programs: a \$650 million "Investing in What Works and Innovation" fund and a \$4.35 billion "Race to the Top" state incentive grant program, both of which are potential sources of funding for afterschool and summer initiatives. The



competitive innovation fund will reward proven programs that increase academic achievement for all groups of students, and can be directly awarded to school districts or partnerships of nonprofit organizations (including cities) and consortiums of schools/school districts. State Incentive Grants will reward states that show measurable progress in raising academic achievement for their students, including progress in raising standards and improving assessment, establishing better data systems, improving teacher effectiveness, and turning around low-performing schools.

While the U.S. Department of Education – and potentially state-level Departments of Education – will have decision-making authority on how to direct the funds, it is expected that the funds will be used to support the Administration’s education policy priorities, including national or common education standards, teacher effectiveness, and community schools with out-of-school time learning opportunities.

Enhancing Education through Technology Grants

Overseen by the U.S. Department of Education's Enhancing Education through Technology (Ed-Tech) program, Educational Technology State Grants will go to states in the fall of 2009. Ninety-five percent will then be distributed to local school districts, half by formula and the other half through a competitive process to eligible local entities. The goal of the Educational Technology State Grants program is to improve student achievement with the use of technology in elementary and secondary schools. Funds can be used to support professional development, public-private partnerships, technology applications, collection and management of school improvement data, software programs to enhance lesson plans, and computer labs.

Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Title I is designed to help disadvantaged students reach high academic standards. A portion of these funds can be used to support afterschool programs as a mechanism for supporting academic achievement, though many districts will likely use these funds to cover budget shortfalls. ARRA has \$13 billion for Title I for distribution through states to local education agency grants, with \$10 billion in formula grants and \$3 billion in sub-grants for school improvement.

AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA

Operated by the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation), AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA are federally funded programs that provide opportunities for people to serve their community while earning money for college tuition and to repay student loans. ARRA includes \$89 million that will be used to make additional awards to existing AmeriCorps state and national grantees and to provide adjustments to awards made prior to September 30, 2010. Additionally, not less than \$65 million will be made available for the AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program. These funds will enable the Corporation to put approximately 13,000 additional AmeriCorps members to work meeting the needs of vulnerable populations and communities during the current economic recession. Funds will generally be used to provide more volunteer positions to existing project sponsors, but some state offices may



consider proposals from new sponsors. Funding may also be used to provide current grantees with relief from requirements to provide matching funds.

Youth Training and Employment Services

The ARRA provides an additional \$1.2 billion for Youth Employment and Training Services under the Workforce Investment Act. Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, these funds have gone to states to allocate to local workforce investment boards, which are operated by municipal government in larger communities and operate regionally elsewhere. The Recovery Act includes and strongly recommends using these funds to create summer jobs for youth ages 16-24 during the summer of 2009. Summer programs (both school- and community-based) can use the funds to provide internships and other workforce opportunities for eligible youth and to hire eligible youth to staff programs. The funds are available to support activities that prepare older youth for employment, and are allocated to states for youth programs like tutoring, work experience, training, and dropout prevention. Funds must be expended by June 30, 2011, but the majority of funds should be spent in 2009.

Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grants

Forty percent of new Byrne-JAG formula grants will be distributed to units of local government and the remainder will go to the states. Byrne-JAG grants support many components of local systems, including prevention and education programs. The Department of Justice has prepared a list of local governments that can apply for Byrne-JAG local formula funds and the funding amount for which cities or counties are eligible. This list can be found at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/recoveryJAG/recoveryallocations.html. In some cases, municipalities and counties are required to submit a joint application. The grant solicitation is already available and the deadline to apply is May 18, 2009. In addition, cities may be able to apply for funding through the state formula funding, as well as for competitive Byrne-JAG funds (application deadline: April 27, 2009), which can be used to support critical nurturing and mentoring of at-risk children and youth.

Opportunities for City Leaders

Both President Obama and U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan have stressed the need for a complete and competitive education for all young people, inside the classroom and through out-of-school time programming. Municipal officials have key opportunities to help lead local – and even statewide – efforts to leverage the ARRA funding to meet the dual goals of ensuring that every child succeeds in school and work, while saving or increasing jobs. Steps to consider include:

- **Work with the school district to secure ARRA funding for out-of-school time programming.** A strong working relationship with the school district and a shared plan for meeting the needs of students outside of the school day will help position the city to utilize new local, state, and federal funding.



- *Innovation Funds:* Cities can prepare to apply for Innovation Funds by planning how to scale up city-supported programs into a citywide system of programs that reach all children and youth; mapping the community to find out where additional programs are needed; and having the data ready to demonstrate both need and capacity to expand into those areas.
 - *Education Technology Funds:* The purchase of shared or compatible technology for schools and OST programs can help expand students' learning opportunities and interest in learning in a variety of settings. In addition, funds can support professional development, data collection systems, and a variety of other purposes that would enhance both schools and OST programs.
 - *Title I Funds:* Title I funding that goes to local school districts can be used to establish or expand extended learning opportunities for Title I eligible students, including programs before and after school, as well as summer programs.
- **Apply to the state for CCDBG funds to support and improve afterschool programs.** Cities that run afterschool programs can talk to their state CCDBG agency to determine whether they qualify to get direct funding for the program if they primarily serve low-income children. Cities can also apply for quality improvement funds to provide grants to local communities for activities that improve the quality of child care (including OST programs for children under age 13). While the amount of funding, the way it is allocated, and the allowable uses vary by state, some typical areas of interest include: professional development and compensation of child care providers; child health and mental health; the inclusiveness of child care settings to special needs children and support for cultural diversity; and monitoring and on-site visits to improve quality.
 - **Build or strengthen connections between law enforcement and OST programs.** Prevention and education are allowable uses of the new Byrne-JAG funding. Working together, city police departments and parks and recreation programs can expand their programming to educate children and youth about risky behaviors, provide positive alternatives, and inform them about the benefits of school success. Police officers can play additional roles as staff in community-based or school programs to serve as mentors, career coaches, or even as theatrical directors to teach students about the dangers of drugs or gangs. The funds can also be used for planning and evaluation, or technology improvements such as geographic information systems (GIS) that can map out where crime occurs and determine the locations of positive afterschool programs. In addition, cities can hire or rehire additional career law enforcement officers through the COPS Hiring Recovery Program and focus these new officers on opportunities to prevent youth violence through innovative afterschool programming to engage youth in positive, productive activities, such as Police Athletic Leagues.



- **Partner with school districts to enhance summer school by providing more comprehensive programming.** ARRA includes \$3 billion in Title I dollars for school improvement efforts, which can include out-of-school time opportunities to help bring disadvantaged children's achievement up to grade level. Cities can serve as a valuable resource to school districts interested in enhancing or augmenting their remedial summer learning programs. Through local departments of parks and recreation or police athletic leagues, cities can add a recreational component. Public works departments can teach youth about sanitation and "green" practices, including recycling. City health departments may have nurses available to teach about nutrition and health-related careers, conduct immunizations, or provide other health services to young people participating in summer programs. Providing supplemental services often increases participation and regular attendance, helping students learn more.
- **Work with the local workforce board, the school district, and OST providers to develop enhanced summer employment programs.** Older youth benefit from programs that allow them to blend work and learning, particularly during the summer. The city can play a critical role in bringing together school-based academic enrichment programs; nonprofit summer programming for youth, which may include life skills and mentoring; and a summer jobs programs. This blend of work, learning, and support helps young people make the most of their work experiences. In addition to facilitating key partnerships, the city can offer skills-based internships within city agencies and encourage city staff to serve as youth mentors. To the extent possible, the U.S. Department of Labor wants summer jobs funding to be used in the summer of 2009, so interested cities should move quickly to build partnerships, design programs, and secure vendors.
- **Coordinate with AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and other volunteer programs in your community to build the staff capacity of afterschool and summer programs.** While the new AmeriCorps state and national funding can only go to current grantees, the dollars will be used to expand the number of volunteers working on local issues, which potentially include youth development. These volunteers can help in a variety of ways, from offering homework help or leading art activities to coordinating youth service projects. Municipal leaders are encouraged to visit the Corporation for National and Community Service's Web site (www.nationalservice.org) to find the organizations in your community that will receive AmeriCorps funding for additional volunteers.
- **Inform families about available afterschool programs and child care subsidies that can help eligible families afford these programs.** City officials can make sure that families are aware of local afterschool programs. Moreover, families with children under age 13 may also qualify for federal and state subsidies to help them take advantage of licensed afterschool programs. Municipal governments can launch public education campaigns that link parents to information and financial help, advertise benefits information at city offices, create and distribute a family resource



guide, and connect families to Child Care Aware, a national toll-free child care consumer telephone hotline and Web site. Child care resource and referral agencies can serve as important partners in these efforts.

- **Communicate your city's needs and successes to state leaders.** Governors and state Departments of Education will need to quickly decide how to spend their allocated ARRA dollars. They will be most interested in solid data about the needs in your community and evaluations of programs that work and could be expanded. In addition, states will be making important decisions about what assessments and systems to use. States will be required to implement longitudinal data systems included in the ARRA (and the COMPETES Act) to better measure student achievement. Cities can advocate for systems that capture the broad benefits of OST activities, including not only academics, but also project-based learning, critical thinking, and communications skills.
- **Partner with your Statewide Afterschool Network to ensure the city voice and needs are reflected in their efforts to shape state policy.** For cities with access to one of the 38 statewide afterschool networks funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, these networks can provide a valuable resource in communicating with and advocating for afterschool funding from the state. State afterschool networks are uniquely positioned to be a key resource to municipalities in communicating with state officials because of their awareness of statewide afterschool needs and their relationships with state-level departments. For more information on statewide afterschool networks, go to www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net.

For additional information, contact:

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Other Useful Links:

- Department of Education General Recovery Web site: www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery
- Statewide Afterschool Networks: www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net
- Afterschool Alliance: www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyEconRecovery.cfm
- Finance Project: www.financeproject.org
- Center for Summer Learning: www.centerforsummerlearning.org



**National League of Cities'
Institute for Youth, Education, and Families**



- Center for Community Schools/ARRA analysis:
http://communityschools.org/CCSDocuments/Stim_Brief_Opportunities_for_CS.doc.pdf
- Center for National and Community Service General Recovery Web site:
<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/index.asp>