

June 1, 2010

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi  
Ranking Member  
Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Enzi:

As the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee prepares to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), we urge you to continue and expand the Committee's strong bi-partisan support for before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs through 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC). As local, state and national youth-serving organizations with a presence throughout the nation, we understand how critical this program is to providing support for more than 1 million children in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. A wealth of research and data demonstrates that these programs help children academically, socially and behaviorally.

Organizations like ours see the value of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC as an essential source of afterschool program funding that leverages a wide array of support—local, state and private—as well as partners, including faith-based organizations, nonprofits, businesses, educational organizations and volunteers.

Despite the demand for and success of afterschool programs, on any given day more than 15 million children are unsupervised after school and more than 18 million would be in programs if they were available and affordable. Now is the time to expand access for more of our most at-risk students, not divert much needed afterschool funding to other programs.

During the hours of 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. when children are most at risk for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex, afterschool programs have a proven record of keeping children safe. Working families also reap the benefits from afterschool programs; parents who are concerned about their children being unattended after the school day ends miss an average of eight days of work per year. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about afterschool care costs businesses an estimated \$50-\$300 billion per year. Recent research has also confirmed the positive impact these programs have on student behavior and academic success: a review of 35 evaluations of academically focused out-of-school programs for at-risk youth found that students who enrolled in these programs, on average, showed improved performance in reading and in mathematics.

In addition to protecting and expanding afterschool programming and opposing any cuts to this much needed program, we urge the committee to look to afterschool partners when designing school reform models. Afterschool programs are able to tap into the best of the community—colleges, museums, scientists, artists, musicians, volunteers, libraries and youth development workers—to teach our children critical workforce skills and connect their passions to learning. The very nature of these voluntary afterschool programs forces an innovative curriculum where students come because they want to learn, not because they have to learn. We believe that there is enormous opportunity to help our most at-risk students and improve our most struggling

schools if we include community based organizations in the design and implementation of school reform.

Thank you for continuing the strong, bipartisan support for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program and making sure the lessons learned by the afterschool community over the past decade help inform school reform.

### **National Organizations**

Afterschool Alliance

After-School All-Stars

Alliance for Children and Families

American Heart Association

ACE Mentor Program of America

Boy Scouts of America

Boys and Girls Clubs of America

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Champions/Knowledge Learning Corporation

Collaborative for Building After-School Systems

For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (*FIRST*)

Food Research and Action Center

Forum for Youth Investment

Generations United

Girls Inc.

Healthy Teen Network

Higher Achievement

Justice Policy Institute

Knowledge Alliance

MENTOR

National 4-H Council

National Afterschool Association

National Association of Elementary School Principals

National Black Police Association  
National Collaboration for Youth  
National Crittenton Foundation  
National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform  
National Network for Youth  
National PTA  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National Science Teachers Association  
National Women's Law Center  
Rebecca Project for Human Rights  
Save the Children  
The SPARK Programs/Sportime  
United Neighborhood Centers of America  
United Way Worldwide  
Voices for America's Children  
Youth Service America  
The YMCA of the USA

**State and Local Organizations**

Alaska Association for Community Education  
Fairbanks Community After School Partnership (AK)  
Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence  
Rural Community Outreach (AR)  
Grandma's Child Care (AR)  
League of California Afterschool Providers (CA)  
Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Helena and Calistoga (CA)  
Coachella Valley Unified School District (CA)  
Green Dot Public Schools (CA)  
LA's BEST (CA)

Operation Pride/The Berkley Junior Tennis League (CA)

Partnership for Children and Youth (CA)

San Francisco Beacon Initiative (CA)

SandCastles Before & After-school & Summer Program, Santa Clarita (CA)

United Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Barbara County (CA)

Woodcraft Rangers (CA)

A World Fit For Kids! (CA)

Connecticut After School Network (CT)

Afterschool for All, New Haven (CT)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware

Delaware AfterSchool Alliance

Girls Incorporated of Delaware

Latin American Community Center (DE)

DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation

People Animals Love (DC)

Lake County Tennis Association (FL)

Georgia Afterschool Investment Council

Build Inc. (IL)

Indiana Afterschool Network

Afterschool Coalition of Indianapolis (IN)

The Children's Coalition of Indiana

Indy Parks & Recreation (IN)

Marion County Commission on Youth, Indianapolis (IN)

Young Audiences Indiana

Iowa Afterschool Alliance

Iowa Community Education Association

Iowa State University Extension 4-H Youth Development Program

Beyond the Bell, Sioux City (IA)

Children and Family Urban Ministries, Des Moines (IA)

Clinton Community Schools (IA)

Echoes Program at Holmes Junior High School, Cedar Falls (IA)

YMCA of the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area (IA)

Kansas Enrichment Network

Kentucky Out-of-School Alliance

Maine Afterschool Network

Maryland Out of School Time Network

The After-School Institute (TASI) (MD)

Baltimore Safe & Sound Campaign (MD)

Foundation for Community Partnerships, Centreville (MD)

Lifelong Learning Center Afterschool Program, Caroline County (MD)

Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families, Inc. (MD)

Young Audiences of Maryland, Baltimore

Michigan After-School Partnership

OMANKANE: THE COLLECTIVE, Detroit (MI)

Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting

Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota

Minnesota School Age Care Alliance

Minnesota Youth Intervention Programs Association

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities (MN)

ISD #4 McGregor Public School District (MN)

Legislative Action Coalition of the Robbinsdale Area Schools (MN)

Minneapolis Beacons Network (MN)

Minneapolis Community Education (MN)

Minneapolis Urban League (MN)

PACT 4 Families Collaborative (MN)

Pillsbury United Communities (MN)

Rochester Public Schools (MN) Community Education (MN)

Saint Paul Second Shift Youth Commission (MN)

Something Cool, Inc. – McGregor Kids Plus (MN)

Warren-Alvarado-Oslo Schools (MN)

West 7<sup>th</sup> Community Center 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC (MN)

Youth Community Connections (MN)

Missouri AfterSchool Network

Missouri Afterschool Resource Center

Missouri Accreditation of Programs for Children and Youth

Missouri Association of Adult Continuing and Community Education (MAACCE)

Missouri School Age Community Coalition

Calhoun 21st CCLC Project (MO)

Camden County Sheriff Office, Camden County (MO)

City of Camdenton (MO)

Herbert Hoover Boys and Girls Club (MO)

Opportunities in a Professional Education Network (OPEN) Initiative (MO)

Partnership for Children, Kansas City (MO)

Project PASS (Partners Assisting Student Success), Camdenton (MO)

Safe BASE Afterschool Programs, City of Nixa (MO)

Swope Corridor Renaissance/Upper Room, Inc. (MO/KS)

Twin Pike Family YMCA (MO)

Nevada Afterschool Network

EducationWorks (NJ)

Afterschool Alliance of New Mexico

Dream Yard Project, Bronx (NY)

The After School Corporation - TASC (NY)

THE POINT Community Development Corporation (NY)

Brooks & Associates Youth and Family Services, LLC (NC)

Oceanic Infinite Home Care, Brunswick County (NC)

The Club House (NC)

Oceanic Professional Restoration Operators (OPRO), Brunswick County (NC)

Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association (OH)

Wood County Educational Service Center of Bowling Green (OH)

OregonASK

Pennsylvania PTA

Pennsylvania School Age Child Care Alliance (PENN SACCA)

PA Area Council of Boys & Girls Club (PA)

Coatesville Community Education Foundation (PA)

Coatesville Area School District 21st CCLC Program (PA)

Farrell Area School District/Sharon Area School District, Farrell (PA)

Garage Community and Youth Center, Kennett Square (PA)

McKeesport Area School District, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC (PA)

Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation (PA)

Pittsburgh Area Association for the Education of Young Children (PA)

SHINE Program, Lehigh Carbon Community College (PA)

Safe Haven Family Life Center (SHFLC), Philadelphia (PA)

St. Paul's Child Development Center, Erie (PA)

York City School District, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program (PA)

Zhang Sah Martial Arts, Philadelphia (PA)

Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance

Providence After School Alliance (RI)

The Infinity Movement, Inc. (TX)

Utah Afterschool Network

The Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence

School's Out Washington

Wisconsin Afterschool Network

West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network

Greater Wyoming Big Brothers Big Sisters

Wyoming Afterschool Alliance

Wyoming Children's Action Alliance

Boys and Girls Club of Campbell County (WY)

Campbell County School District #1 (WY)

Campbell County 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Project (WY)

Northern Arapaho Tribal Education (WY)

YES House, Campbell County (WY)