

### Selected Comments on the Federal Tax Credit Scholarship

Excerpts from several organizations' comment letters to [Notice 2027-70](#), emphasizing the importance of including afterschool programs as part of the scholarship program. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list.

Specific mentions of afterschool:

- National Parents Union
- National School Boards Association
- National League of Cities
- National Association of Education Foundations
- Third Way
- Boys and Girls Clubs of America
- Fight Crime Invest in Kids
- The YMCA of the USA
- American Camp Association
- Save the Children
- Every Hour Counts
- STEM Next Opportunity Fund
- Governor Jared Polis (Colorado)

Comments highlighting the need for flexibility for scholarship granting organizations (SGOs):

- The American Federation for Children
- The National Alliance of Public Charter Schools
- The National Education Association
- The Federal Tax Credit Scholarship Coalition

#### National Parents Union

- Referenced polling data suggesting the tax scholarship may reach a broader population of parents and receive significantly more support at the state and national level through ensuring inclusion of expanded learning opportunities. “Polling conducted with parents shows strong and consistent support for tax credit scholarship programs when those programs are designed to expand learning opportunities for public school students, not when they are limited solely to private school tuition. When families are given the choice to use scholarship funds for extended learning opportunities, such as tutoring, afterschool, or summer programs, 82% of parents support the program. Support remains high (77%) when funds are dedicated exclusively to extended learning for public school students. By contrast, when funds are limited only to private school tuition,

support drops sharply to 40%, with a majority of parents opposing the program.”

- Asked Treasury to “clearly affirm that tax credit scholarships may be used to support public school students through high-quality extended learning opportunities including: Tutoring and academic intervention programs, Afterschool and extended day programs, Summer learning and enrichment programs.

#### National School Boards Association

- Asked that Treasury allow a state definition of “supplementary items and services (including extended day programs)” which may include (so long as they are otherwise eligible): afterschool program not on the school campus; summer school programs; workforce apprenticeship programs; field trips with associated costs for students.

#### National League of Cities

- Noted “more than 96% of local officials find afterschool programs to be important to their community.”
- They uplifted the importance of “ensuring maximum choice for parents and students to reduce the financial burden of educational costs for low-and middle-income families has a direct impact on local economic conditions and overall wellbeing of the community.”
- Recommended “that the definition of “extended day” opportunities be inclusive of afterschool and summer learning programs offered directly through schools, as well as those offered by community-based partners, faith-based, and/or not-for-profit partners that partner closely with schools.”

#### National Association of Education Foundations

- Recommended “that Treasury and the IRS adopt a clear and inclusive definition of allowable education expenses, explicitly recognizing extended-day, extended-year, and supplemental learning opportunities delivered by qualified providers on or off school campuses.”
- Their letter lists afterschool and summer learning programs as well as credit recovery, job shadowing and experiential learning costs among what they believe ought to be clearly allowed to qualify.

### Third Way

- Wanted regulations to ensure “eligible schools may partner with outside organizations to provide qualifying services that are not financed by the school, district, or local education agencies (LEA)—for instance, a community-based afterschool program, a dual-enrollment course offered by a local college, or contracted special education services”
- Asked that “Treasury include language to clarify that expenses for services ‘provided by’ a partner of an eligible school, or ‘required by’ schools, districts, LEAs, or states for some or all students, qualify as permissible uses of scholarship funds from approved scholarship granting organizations (SGOs). Such clarification will preserve the flexibility intended by Congress and ensure that students attending public, private, and religious schools alike are broadly able to benefit from scholarships through the program.”

### Boys and Girls Clubs of America

- Requested that Treasury “make it explicitly clear that ‘extended day’ includes before-school, afterschool and summer programming as qualified educational expenses and that parents can select programs that are run by high-quality, community-based organizations and are not located on a school campus.”

### Fight Crime Invest in Kids

- Emphasized both afterschool and summer programs “not only reduce crime by providing engaging activities for youth during a time they may otherwise be unsupervised, but they also have been shown to boost academic achievement, improve behavior, foster healthy behaviors, and save money in the long run.”
- Included “a meta-analysis of 68 afterschool programs across the country found that participation resulted in improved performance on state reading and math achievement tests, higher GPAs, and higher rates of school-day attendance.”
- Highlighted that “every dollar invested in afterschool and summer programs leads to a return on investment of three dollars due to increased earning potential, improvement in school, reduced crime and welfare costs.”

### The YMCA of the USA

- Asked Treasury to provide a definition of extended day that included afterschool programs including at locations like community organizations and stand-alone youth centers, while noting, “The Y serves 6.6 million youth a year, including more than 480,000 school-age children in afterschool programs.”

### American Camp Association

- Commented that “High-quality camp and summer learning programs—particularly those operated by nonprofit organizations and community-based providers—function as supplementary educational services that directly support students’ academic success, social-emotional development, and overall well-being. These programs are often offered in coordination with schools, aligned to educational standards, and designed to reinforce learning outcomes during out-of-school and summer periods.”
- Urged Treasury to “clarify that nonprofit organizations and CBOs that operate accredited camps or summer learning programs may be eligible to receive scholarship funds from SGOs on behalf of eligible students.”

### Save the Children

- “Save the Children is excited to work with the Treasury Department to maximize opportunities for parents and students throughout the United States. Save the Children is dedicated to ensuring all children have the opportunity to succeed and thrive. Access to learning during non-school time is an essential component to ensuring success for every child.”

### Every Hour Counts

- “Expanded learning programs fill key gaps in educational services and ensure that the needs of all students are met in a range of settings - on and off school campuses. Expanded learning programs provide parents with the knowledge that their children are experiencing safe, educational programming throughout the day and throughout the year outside of the regular school day hours. These programs and the intermediaries that support them are trusted organizations and community anchors that serve a well-documented demand among parents. The IRS should ensure that there is flexibility in the regulation to allow parents to use the scholarship for the programs that they know and trust for their children.”

### STEM Next Opportunity Fund

- “Given that 80 percent of young people’s waking hours are spent outside the classroom, afterschool, summer, and other out-of-school time, STEM learning environments (such as libraries, science centers, community-based organizations, amongst others) are crucial partners to K-12 in advancing learning started during the school day and in shaping how young people understand and engage with AI and other emerging technologies.”

- “To ensure that families can use the credits to support high-quality STEM learning, it is imperative that the term extended day is defined and that the eligible entities include school-based experiences but also high-quality experiences that occur in community-based organizations and other STEM rich learning settings.”

#### Governor Jared Polis (Colo.)

- “This credit has the potential to provide significant federal dollars to support a wide range of Colorado students’ educational expenses, including scholarships and critical afterschool supports, by encouraging taxpayers to donate to eligible SGOs in our state. However, without careful consideration of how states select and monitor their eligible SGOs, this credit also has the potential to lead to fraud, waste, and abuse.”
- “It also remains critically important as a Governor that the Treasury Department provides guidance that allows for the broadest use of funds towards eligible education expenses, as Congress intended when drafting this provision in H.R. 1. There is a significant need to ensure that students attending any kind of school have the opportunity to access critical educational supports, including those provided during afterschool and summer hours.”

Other groups spoke more generally about the need to allow Scholarship Granting Organizations to structure themselves around their expertise, providing a wide range of SGOs across different settings to facilitate high quality parent choice.

#### The American Federation for Children

- Highlighted Senator Bill Cassidy (R-La.)’s statement that, “Parents want to see their child succeed. Giving them the ability to make decisions over their child’s education puts that child’s needs first” and uplifted the importance of making access as easy as possible for families.

#### The National Alliance of Public Charter Schools

- “We believe that the regulations will be most effective if they allow for a wide range of scholarship granting organizations (SGOs) and schools to participate and a wide variety of services to be covered by scholarships.”
- Asked that Treasury/IRS: “Ensure states allow scholarships to be used for any qualified elementary and secondary education expenses (as defined in Section 503). To ensure maximum impact for students, the sufficiently broad definitions of allowable expenses

referenced in statute should be supported through regulations and not limited in any way”

#### The National Education Association

- Noted reservations about limited guardrails at the federal or state level. “Department guidance and regulations must reflect the state responsibility to certify SGOs, and in so doing, to determine which SGOs are qualified to award scholarships in each state.” Their comments included specific examples of misused funds in current state voucher programs, and examples of state voucher programs that do require additional program parameters such as an analysis of awards by zip code and low-income status as well as parent satisfaction surveys.
- Asked Treasury to “create a level playing field to ensure that students attending public schools have equal access to scholarships to be used for evidence-based interventions that support their academic growth.”

#### The Federal Tax Credit Scholarship Coalition

- Advocated for broad freedom for program participants "Nothing in this part shall be construed to permit, allow, encourage, or authorize any Federal, State, or local government entity, or officer or employee thereof, to mandate, direct, or control any aspect of any scholarship granting organization or of any private or religious elementary or secondary education institution."
- Promoted the idea that SGO's have “the flexibility to specialize in a given area or customize who they serve and what types of expenses they will cover all within the limits provided in the law. This would include limiting scholarships to students with lower incomes or who attend specific private or public schools, or an SGO could choose to focus only on tutoring or special needs services.”