



AFTERSCHOOL LEADERS ALARMED BY PRESIDENT'S PLAN FOR EDUCATION REFORM

Across the country, afterschool leaders and supporters are asking the Obama Administration tough questions about its "[*Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*](#)" (ESEA). Coupled with the President's proposed Fiscal Year 2011 budget for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, advocates are concerned that the Administration intends to take precious resources away from programs that provide educational and enrichment activities for children and youth before school, after school and during the summer, and instead use those resources to extend the school day.

At a time when 15 million children have no supervised activity after the school day ends, President Obama asked Congress to effectively cut funding for 21st CCLCs – the chief federal funding stream for afterschool programs – by \$13 million in Fiscal Year 2011. And in its "[*Blueprint for Reform*](#)," the Administration contemplates: allowing extended day programs to compete for afterschool dollars; ending the formula allocations that ensure that funds will flow to the states based on the number of students in need in that state; and diminishing the role of community-based organizations (CBOs) in providing services for students.

Specifically, the "[*Blueprint for Reform*](#)" would:

Reform continued on page seven...

AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL CHALLENGE – REGISTER TODAY!

The [National AfterSchool Association convention and Afterschool for All Challenge](#), April 19 – 21, provides a powerful opportunity for afterschool supporters to come to Capitol Hill and meet directly with lawmakers as they begin their discussions on the future of 21st Century Community Learning Centers and other vital youth initiatives. It is not too late to [register](#) for this three-day event, which also offers the chance to attend workshops and plenary sessions and to network with hundreds of other afterschool experts and providers from around the nation.

"This year Congress is doing more than negotiating the budget for Fiscal Year 2011. This year lawmakers are debating education reform and making decisions that will affect how federal education dollars are allocated for years to come," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Lawmakers need to hear about the support and security that afterschool programs give to students, families and communities. The *Challenge* is a tremendous opportunity to share information, evaluations and personal stories that really make a difference."

This year, the *Afterschool for All Challenge* will feature a rally on Capitol Hill, led by television personality and afterschool supporter Judge Glenda Hatchett. Actor Hill Harper of the television drama series "CSI: NY" and musician Mark Bryan of Hootie & the Blowfish will lend their star-studded support to the event.

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OUTREACH

Afterschool leaders are deeply concerned about the Administration's "*Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*" and what it means for the future of afterschool programs. (Read more on afterschool and the *Blueprint* in "Afterschool Leaders Alarmed By President's Plan For Education Reform," in this issue.) Advocates can help spread the word about the importance of afterschool programs and the unique benefits they provide. Below is a sample letter-to-the-editor, which can be localized and then sent to a local newspaper. Please feel free to add information about your program and the need for more afterschool programs – and more funding for existing programs – in your community. (Most newspapers have information on their websites about how to submit letters-to-the-editor.)

[Date]

To the Editor:

The President recently released his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2011 and his blueprint for reforming public education. Some of the provisions should give pause to the millions of families who want and need afterschool programs for their kids.

Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. But the President would make it harder for these programs to get federal grant dollars to support their work. His "*Blueprint for Reform*" calls for making non-afterschool programs eligible for the already insufficient grant dollars of 21st Century Community Learning Centers – the principal federal funding stream for afterschool. Moreover, it would federalize the grantmaking, taking decisions away from states and vesting it in Washington, with no guarantees that the money will be divided fairly. That will make it harder for some afterschool programs – rural ones, or those without expert grant writers, for example – to get grants.

One key element of the President's plan is longer school days. Whether that has merit depends on how the extended time is spent, and whether schools learn lessons from afterschool programs or use the time to squeeze in still more drilling in preparation for standardized tests. Afterschool programs are successful because they give children quality, engaging and enriching activities –hands-on learning, activities in the community, and more. Here in [your town], [name of your program] engages students by [describe a few activities like field trips, mentoring, community services, and hands-on learning that afterschool students enjoy and learn from].

It's not just about how long kids are in school, it's about what they do during that additional time. And even with extended school days, kids will need afterschool programs to make sure they're safe and constructively engaged until their parents get home from work.

In coming months, Congress will decide the fate of the President's proposals. Hanging in the balance is the future of the afterschool programs our children need.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your program]

Afterschool for All

You can help make afterschool for all a priority in your community and nationwide by joining the *Afterschool for All* campaign. Already more than 25,000 concerned individuals and organizations have signed on to the campaign in support of afterschool programs and the families they serve. It takes only a minute to add your name to the national list of partners. [Sign up today.](#)

Visit the *Afterschool for All* website to [see which new partners have signed up](#) in your state. Contact Marie Coichy-Dauphin, Project Manager, *Afterschool for All* at mdauphin@afterschoolalliance.org or at 646-943-8662 with any questions or comments.



FUNDING NEWS

The Afterschool Alliance's website has resources for afterschool providers, including tips for initiating relationships with funders and businesses, and for identifying funding opportunities. *To learn more, click [here](#). Remember to check [here](#), to find out how afterschool programs might tap into economic recovery funds.*

GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

Grants for Enrichment Programs

Target Foundation is sponsoring grants of \$2,000 for arts and culture programs that serve students in grades K-12. The program should enhance students' classroom curriculum, and schools, libraries, public agencies and non-profits are eligible. The deadline to apply is April 30.

The Target Foundation is also sponsoring Field Trip Grants of up to \$1,000 for educators to take students on educational field trips. Ideas for exploring the world outside the classroom can be found with the free [Field Trip Idea Generator](#) tool. The deadline to apply is August 1.

For more information on both Target Foundation grants, click [here](#).



CONGRESS PRESSES DUNCAN ON 21st CCLC, COMPETITIVE GRANTS

In three separate hearings in recent weeks, Members of Congress continued to express concern about the Administration's proposal to convert many existing education programs, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) afterschool initiative, into competitive grants. Education Secretary Arne Duncan defended the Administration's proposal before House and Senate committees on March 17 and 18.

Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY) questioned Secretary Duncan during his appearance before the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies about 21st CCLC funding and the Administration's support for afterschool. She noted that, although the President's budget proposal may appear to flat fund the 21st CCLC program, in fact it would receive a \$13 million cut because \$10 million of 21st CCLC funding would go to full-service community schools and \$3 million would be diverted to cover the administrative costs for the Department of Education to run as a national competition.

"Why is the department proposing to effectively reduce afterschool funding by using these funds for other purposes, as good as they may be, besides funding 21st CCLC? How does extending the school day fill the gap between what would otherwise be accomplished through afterschool programs," Representative Lowey asked. "And given the obvious need for more afterschool programs, did the Department consider increasing funding for the program? You've asked for an overall increase in the budget, so I would say why didn't you increase these programs when the need is so obvious?"

Secretary Duncan responded that he was aware of the "extraordinary benefits" offered by afterschool programs, and that the Administration's proposal provides the

opportunity for increased funding for both afterschool and extended day programs by linking the two. "We're not looking to cut funding," he claimed. "We're challenging grantees to tackle both of those two things... There's a chance here for folks who are being creative to add time. We couldn't agree with you more. We want to add more time after school," he said.

Secretary Duncan argued that, if the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act's* (ESEA) is reauthorized this year, President Obama has promised an additional \$1 billion for education, "and we want to put a large chunk of that money into afterschool program[s]."

In all three hearings, Secretary Duncan was questioned about the logic behind converting a number of programs – many of which are under-funded – into competitive grants. "Just to be very, very clear, big-picture, almost three-fourths of our budget is continuing to be formula-based, and so the overwhelming majority of our money will be formula-based. We are moving some money in the competitive direction. And just – we want to go where the greatest need is," he said.

Afterschool leaders remain deeply concerned about the Administration's proposal. While Secretary Duncan said positive things about afterschool programs, the Administration's proposed "*Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*" suggests a move from afterschool programs that stress a combination of academics and enrichment and take advantage of assets in the community, to a model of extended day that stresses more instructional time and does not include community-based groups in key roles.

"The paradox lies in the fact that the *Blueprint* would divert afterschool funding despite the fact that key Administration leaders speak highly of afterschool programs," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "The afterschool community is looking to the

Administration to provide more than ‘big picture’ rhetoric and to clearly identify the ways in which the *Blueprint* would support afterschool and allow millions more children access to the safe and enriching activities that these programs provide.”

For more information on the Administration’s proposal, and to take action in support of afterschool programs, visit the Afterschool Alliance’s [Policy & Action Center](#).



IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“We need a dedicated funding stream for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and we have a strong preference that the funding for full-service community schools be a distinct funding stream.”

--Martin Blank, Executive Director of the Coalition for Community Schools, *Education Daily*, March 16, 2010

Voices from the Afterschool Storybook...

“Another great thing about the OWN afterschool program is its focus on global leadership and awareness, which has helped me expand my previously nascent global perspective... My experiences in the global leadership courses at OWN have inspired me to become a catalyst for social change and to help others realize their goals.”

--Philmon Haile, Seattle, Washington

To read Haile’s story, and read more afterschool voices from across the country, [click here](#). Share your story [here](#).



IN THE NEWS...

California – A new report by [Fight Crime: Invest in Kids](#) finds that California leads the nation in investment in afterschool programs. The state’s afterschool programs serve more than 400,000 students, and California invests more than three times more in afterschool programs than the 49 states combined. “Quality afterschool programs are a crucial weapon against crime,” said San Mateo Police Chief Susan E. Manheimer, President of the California Police Chiefs Association and Executive Committee Member of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California. “Our public safety depends on California’s continuing, strong leadership on afterschool programs.” Despite the investment, the state does not have enough afterschool programs to meet demand. Nearly 2,000 schools in low-income neighborhoods do not have afterschool programs, the study found, and many other programs have waiting lists. *For more information, click [here](#).*

Florida – A Tampa City Council member proposed a \$1 monthly tax on property owners to generate money for the parks department, after community members spoke out against recent fee increases for afterschool programs and recreational activities. Modeled after an existing stormwater fee, the tax would bring in an estimated \$2 million for programs for children and seniors – more than the \$1.2 million the increased program fees would have generated this year. Since fees were put in place for afterschool programs in October 2009, enrollment has dropped from 1,700 students to 784, the *St. Petersburg Times* reports.

Iowa – A free afterschool program in Prairie Point schools is [helping children with Asperger’s syndrome](#), a mild form of autism that affects communication and social skills. Children with Asperger’s usually have average or above-average intelligence, but struggle with eye contact and reading body

language or facial expressions. The one-of-its-kind program in the state, run by the Cedar Rapids non-profit [Four Oaks](#), teaches social interaction and anxiety management, tailored to each child's individual needs. The Asperger's Program has seen its enrollment more than triple since 2008, the *Associated Press* reports, thanks in part to greater awareness of the condition.

Maryland – Eight-year-old Joshua may look well suited for basketball because of his height, but he stays after school at East Silver Spring Elementary School for something else – ballet. Joshua benefits from a free afterschool program that is designed to expose youth to cultures and skills they would otherwise not have access to, the *Washington Post* reports. The program was started two years ago when budget cuts eliminated afterschool programs, and is now made possible by donations and staff from local businesses, non-profits, parents and community volunteers. The program also offers cooking, French and Chinese, a newspaper club, karate and cheerleading.

Michigan – The children of Battle Creek Public Schools 21st Century Community Learning Center celebrated Reading Month royally, after a two-month study of the medieval period. About 1,000 students from across the school district gathered for a medieval themed festival, complete with sword fighting and a feast. In the weeks leading up to the festival, students finished reading Marguerite de Angeli's "The Door in the Wall," built castles and decorated shields, the *Battle Creek Enquirer* reports. The winner of the castle-building competition was crowned king for the afternoon.

New York – Afterschool programs and other programs for youth are a top priority, the Poughkeepsie Mayor's Youth Council told city officials at their first meeting this month. The dozen young people on the new Council, who were selected by Mayor John Tkazyik,

also expressed concern over youth violence and shootings, the *Poughkeepsie Journal* reports. The Youth Council was formed last year, after a series of city-sponsored community summits on gun violence. "We want young people to know they have a voice here in the city," Mayor Tkazyik said. "I'm thankful these young people answered the call."

Virginia – The young women of IRIS (Instilling Responsible Ideals Through Sisterhood) are not your typical high school clique. The afterschool girls club – started at Dominion High School in Sterling, and now at two more area high schools – teaches real-life lessons and encourages bonding between girls who would normally not get to know each other. This month they held a Girls Night Out, open to high school girls from around the county, which featured keynote speakers Beth Holloway, mother of Natalee Holloway, and activist Ben Atherton-Zeman, who teaches lessons about dating violence and healthy relationships. The event also featured sessions on self-defense, nutrition, health, beauty and fashion, the *Washington Post* reports.



TEACHING THROUGH COOKING

When we think of restaurant chefs, we tend to think of people who create complicated, high-fat, expensive meals, but Chef Joey Altman is using his culinary skills to teach kids about nutrition, as well as math, science, cooperation and, of course, cooking! Tune in to Afterschool Radio at www.afterschoolalliance.org to hear the Afterschool Alliance's Jodi Grant interview celebrity chef Joey Altman about using cooking to engage children and teach healthy eating habits.

ENCOURAGING HIGHER EDUCATION

KnowHow2GO, a Lumina-funded public-awareness effort involving the Ad Council, the American Council on Education and other allies, is designed to encourage low-income students in grades eight to ten and their families to take the necessary steps toward college. The campaign's public service advertisements urge young people to find someone who can help them get to college and direct students and their mentors to a Web site and other resources.

KnowHow2GO also features a network of educational institutions, youth organizations, community groups that offer support to students. This "ground campaign" complements the media campaign. Through Lumina's support of the KnowHow2GO ground campaign, direct-service grants are helping underserved, low-income students learn how to get to college. Visit www.KnowHow2Go.org for more information.



ONLINE AUCTION TO BENEFIT CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM

The [Story Pirates](#) have been encouraging creative writing by New York-area children since 2003, and now they're doing all they can to give back to the schools they serve. The community acting group presents a series of writing workshops that teach language arts and encourage writing, both in school and in afterschool programs. The group selects stories written by students to be acted out in their weekly show, or made into [a song or video](#). Students from across the country are welcome to submit original stories for consideration.

The Story Pirates teamed up with afterschool supporters Jon Stewart and John Oliver of Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*

with Jon Stewart for a benefit on March 21 to raise money for New York's neediest schools. To see some of the Story Pirates' performances, click [here](#). For more information on the Story Pirates and the fundraiser, click [here](#).



KEEP UP WITH AFTERSCHOOL NEWS!

Hungry for the latest news about afterschool? Be sure to check out [Afterschool Snack](#), the Afterschool Alliance's up to the minute blog on afterschool news, trends and information from across the country. Recent posts include:

- *Afterschool for All Challenge* Guest Highlight: Mark Bryan from Hootie & the Blowfish
- Miranda Cosgrove, Harlem RBI & Quaker Chewy Rocks Afterschool Kick-Off Event!

And be sure to tune in every Wednesday for a national news round-up, and throughout the week for your daily dose of afterschool. Check out Afterschool Snack [here](#).



Reform continued from page one...

- Consolidate afterschool along with extended day and community schools under 21st CCLC.
- End competitions for afterschool grants in all 50 states and end funding allocations determined by formulas. It would instead establish two national competitions run by the U.S. Department of Education. One competition would be for State Education Agencies, and the other for Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Some states and communities,

including those with large rural and low-income populations, would likely be at a severe disadvantage in these national competitions.

- o Prohibit CBOs from applying for 21st CCLC funds or acting as the lead partner in a grant application. Instead, priority would be given to LEAs that apply in partnership with CBOs. Additional details about how partnerships will be structured are still unavailable.

“We all agree with the goal to build a world-class education system that will work for all students and make our nation strong and competitive for generations to come,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “But some of the Administration’s proposals are alarming. Secretary Duncan has tried to reassure afterschool leaders in the field – and afterschool supporters in Congress – that he supports these programs, but the Administration’s proposals simply do not match that rhetoric. So far, the Department’s responses to our pleas for clarification and specificity have not included the details we need.”

“Reform will only work if we apply the lessons that make afterschool programs so successful to our efforts to extend the school day,” Grant continued. “We need to involve community partners, and engage students with activities that enrich their lives and inspire their imaginations. Afterschool programs work because they offer applied science, experiential learning, music and art, community service activities, mentoring, job readiness and much more. Unless we provide those activities during extended school hours, and provide additional resources to support both extended day and afterschool programs, we are unlikely to achieve our goals. It is important to remember that extended day programs will not keep students in school until 6 or 7 PM, when parents get home from

work, so extending the school day will not eliminate the need for afterschool programs.”

To stay apprised of the latest news as education reform advances, and to take action in support of afterschool programs, visit the Afterschool Alliance’s [Policy & Action Center](#).



Challenge continued from page one...


Participants will have the opportunity to attend hundreds of workshops, as well as the “Breakfast of Champions” honoring afterschool leaders.

As in years past, the youth themselves will participate in special advocacy training sessions and learn to share their own afterschool experiences with their lawmakers in effective and powerful ways.

The *Challenge* is being held in conjunction with the National AfterSchool Association’s 2010 Convention. *To learn more about the Challenge, and to register, click [here](#).*



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

 **April 7 – 9, 2010**

The Coalition for Community Schools will host its 2010 National Forum, Building Innovative Partnerships for Student Success, in Philadelphia. The conference will focus on partnerships between schools and communities for student success. Speakers will include U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, and the presidents of both the National Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ April 19 – 21, 2010

For the first time ever, the Afterschool Alliance's *Afterschool for All Challenge* will be held in conjunction with Be the Change, the National Afterschool Association's annual convention. The combined event will be held in Washington, D.C. and will include workshops, plenary sessions, a gala "Breakfast of Champions," and visits with lawmakers on Capitol Hill. [Register now](#) and help shake up the nation's Capitol!

✍ May 21, 2010

Join the Afterschool Alliance and the National Summer Learning Association for a webinar event that will unveil new findings about the summertime experiences of the nation's children, according to newly released data from the *America After 3PM* survey. Don't miss the release of these critical findings designed to help make the case for the integral role summer programs play in the lives of young people. The webinar will take place from 3 to 4 PM. [Register](#) and reserve the time on your calendar today!

✍ June 21, 2010

Spring is just beginning to arrive, but June 21 will be here quickly. Don't delay! Start planning your Summer Learning Day event now. This national advocacy day is a great opportunity to showcase your program and get the word out about the importance of summer learning. Join communities across the country in celebrating the importance of summer learning. Summer Learning Day is supported by elected officials and policy makers, public agencies, nonprofit

organizations, schools, universities, museums, libraries and summer camps across the country. Design an event that demonstrates the value of your program and generates more support for summer learning in your community. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ July 12 – 15, 2010

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time will host a series of two-day summer seminars in Boston, Massachusetts. Topics to be covered on July 12 and 13 include elevating professional development at the program and system level, and the Afterschool Program Assessment System. Seminars on July 14 and 15 include effective management training and quality advisor training. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ October 21, 2010

The Afterschool Alliance will sponsor the 11th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, raising awareness about the benefits of afterschool in communities across the country. *For more information, click [here](#).*

✍ November 2 – 4, 2010

The California Afterschool Network will host its second annual Step Up High School Summit in San Diego. Afterschool professionals, staff members and high school administrators will gather to discuss ideas and promising practices for high school afterschool programs. *For more information, click [here](#).*

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, JCPenney Afterschool Fund, Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation.

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