



BUDGET FIGHT TAKES SHAPE

Two competing visions for federal support for afterschool programs came into sharp focus in the last few days as President Obama and leaders of the House Appropriations Committee released their respective budget plans. One would cut \$100 million in federal funding for afterschool programs; the other would increase funding by \$100 million, although at the same time allowing non-afterschool programs to compete for 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative (21st CCLC) dollars.

The House Appropriations plan for afterschool is part of a proposed budget for the federal government for the remainder of the current fiscal year – FY2011 – and it is expected to come to the floor of the House for a vote in the next week or so. If it were applied over the course of a year, the bill's \$100 million cut would mean 100,000 students across the country would lose their afterschool programs.

The President's budget proposal covers a different time period: FY2012, which starts on October 1 of this year. The President would boost current funding for the 21st CCLC by \$100 million to \$1.266 billion. However, his plan would do something else that could diminish the funds available for afterschool programs. In the past, 21st CCLC funds have been reserved exclusively for afterschool, before school and summer enrichment programs. The President proposes to permit states to make 21st CCLC grants for a host of additional programs as well, including summer school, time for teacher planning and professional development, and adding time to the traditional school day.

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AFTERSCHOOL ADVOCATES TAKE TO CAPITOL HILL

In anticipation of FY2011 and FY2012 budget activity, on Friday, February 11th, the bipartisan Senate Afterschool Caucus organized a briefing for new and existing Senate staff to provide an overview of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative. The goal was to help Senate staff understand the important role that afterschool programs play in the safe and healthy development of millions of children by enhancing learning, keeping students safe when school is out of session, and helping working families. Speakers representing education, law-enforcement and a community-based organization described how afterschool and summer learning programs are meeting a host of new challenges and engaging children in their education and future.

Dr. Roberto A. Pamas, Ed.D., Principal of O.W. Holmes Middle School in Fairfax County, Virginia, said that the 21st CCLC funded afterschool program at Holmes Middle School is not childcare or an extension of the school day. Rather, he said, it provides a safe, structured environment where students can thrive.

Holmes Middle School serves 750 students in grades six to nine, and more than one-fifth who start the school year do not finish the year at Holmes. Gangs also are a major concern. 21st CCLC funds an afterschool program, where teachers and afterschool staff work closely to provide a mix of activities that have improved academic achievement, lowered failure rates and reduced disciplinary actions and gang...
Capitol Hill continued on page eight...

OUTREACH

Say 'NO!' to Proposed Cuts to Afterschool Funding

Congress needs to hear from afterschool leaders and others opposing the House Appropriations Committee's proposed cuts to afterschool funding. *To send a message to your Member of Congress urging that they oppose these cuts, click [here](#).*

You can also send a letter-to-the-editor to your newspaper, urging Congress to vote down cuts to afterschool. Don't wait! The House is likely to vote on its FY2011 funding bill very soon. A sample letter follows, and you can find data on how the proposed cut would affect your state to add to your letter [here](#):

To the Editor:

The House of Representatives is preparing to vote on a budget bill that would severely harm afterschool programs across the state. The plan would reduce federal funding for afterschool by \$100 million, meaning that about 100,000 students nationwide would lose their afterschool programs.

Even without these proposed cuts, more than 15 million children in the United States have no safe, supervised activities after the school day ends. By contrast, quality afterschool programs keep children safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. And they're particularly important in the current economic climate, because working parents can rely on them to make sure their kids are safe and constructively engaged during the late afternoon hours.

We need to create more programs, not cut the ones that are already essential to our kids and families. This is a bad proposal, and it deserves to be defeated. If it gets through the House, let's hope the Senate and the President stand up and fight it.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your program]



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](#).*

GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

Grants for Earth-Friendly Projects

Hickory Springs is sponsoring the second EarthCare Challenge, where communities and school groups will compete to show how environmental education is inspiring green initiatives in communities across the country. Teams should post a photo or video of their green project on Hickory Springs' EarthCare Challenge Facebook page for a chance to win a \$1,000 cash prize and a collection of furniture from Hickory Springs' recycled and bio-based line. The deadline is February 18. *For more information, click [here](#).*

Grants for Fighting Childhood Hunger

The Sodexo Foundation and Youth Service America are awarding \$500 grants for youth-inspired solutions to ending childhood hunger. One hundred grants will be awarded to youth who engage their communities on Global Youth Service Day, April 15-17, to fight local childhood hunger. The deadline is February 25. *For more information, click [here](#).*

Grants for Environmental Service Projects

Youth Service America and Disney are sponsoring the Disney Friends for Change Grants for youth-led service projects that make a positive impact on the environment and engage youth on Global Youth Service Day, April 15-17. Fifty \$500 grants will be awarded to youth from around the world, ages five to 25. The deadline is March 10. *For more information, click [here](#).*



ISSUE BRIEF: AFTERSCHOOL IN CAREER AND COLLEGE PREPARATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

A new MetLife-Afterschool Alliance Issue Brief, “Afterschool: Supporting Career and College Pathways for Middle School Age Youth,” explores how afterschool programs can help middle school youth understand the importance of staying on the path to high school graduation and postsecondary success. It is one in a series of Issue Briefs sponsored by the MetLife Foundation that addresses the benefits afterschool programs provide to youth, families and communities.

The new Brief notes that the middle school years are a critical time to impress upon youth the importance of higher education and career readiness. Afterschool and summer programs can help students realize their potential, keep them on track and out of trouble, engage them in learning, and help close the achievement gap, increase graduation rates and promote postsecondary success.

“The middle school years are a vital time to teach the importance of college and career readiness and the linkages to success in life. Afterschool programs offer a key opportunity to expose middle school students to higher education options and career paths and to teach them skills that can unlock doors to future career prospects,” the Brief says.

The Issue Brief offers several examples of afterschool programs that successfully meet the needs of middle schoolers. It is the last of four briefs examining critical issues facing middle school youth and the vital role afterschool programs play in addressing these issues. *To view it, click [here](#).*



IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“Afterschool programs have proven results to combat these problems. Teachers in my home state of Michigan reported that approximately 70 percent of students who regularly attend 21st Century Community Learning Centers showed improvement in classroom behavior, participation and homework quality. These kinds of programs help turn our schools into community centers that provide safe environments where learning happens beyond the traditional school day... At a time when so many working families are struggling to make ends meet and provide childcare, we need to expand after school. Nine years ago, the reauthorization of *ESEA [Elementary and Secondary Education Act]* included a bipartisan commitment to quality afterschool programs. It is critical that we reaffirm that commitment to our children this year.”

--Rep. Dale Kildee (D-MI), ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, in *The Hill's Congress Blog*, February 7, 2011

“As the site coordinator of the after-school program at Richmond Hill High School in South Queens, I have witnessed the profound impact of extended learning time on students of varying learning abilities. By offering quality activities in the arts, sports and academic fields between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m., the after-school program provides the youth a valuable, safe place to further engage in learning. This semester, the program will include West Indian Dance, flag football and visual arts... After school programs help close the education gap by inspiring the youth to learn, keeping them safe, and helping working families tend to their kids. The youth should not have to stop learning when school is over. On the contrary, we should provide them with all the opportunities they need.”

--Afterschool Ambassador Neha Gautam, South Asian Youth Action, [After-School](#)

[Programs Minimize Education Gap](#),
Queens7.com, February 9, 2011

Voices from the Afterschool Storybook...

“I’ve learned a lot in my years helping at the Boys and Girls Club. I had a hard life growing up and I never had the things that these kids have now. I’m so happy to be helping these children.”

--Theresa West, Lakeland, Florida

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



IN THE NEWS...

National – Sobering news came out of the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, commonly known as “The Nation’s Report Card,” which reported that less than half of U.S. students are proficient in science, but there was a [silver lining for afterschool](#). The same study reports that fourth grade students who did hands-on science – and students in eighth and 12th grades who did science in out-of-school time – posted better scores than those who had no such opportunities. To read the report, click [here](#).

Alabama – Theater students from Auburn University performed poetry for afterschool students at Loachapoka Elementary School as part of “Lift Every Voice: A Celebration of African-American Praise Poetry.” Eighty-five afterschool students, kindergarten through eighth grade, heard works by Langston Hughes, Lucille Clifton and Maya Angelou, performed to drum beats and song. “That oral tradition allows the kids to be inspired and learn a lot easier than just seeing it on the page,” Doc Waller, executive director of the arts nonprofit The Layman Group, told the *Opelika-Auburn News*. “It’s the words coming alive.”

California – Hundreds of elementary school students are learning French, Mandarin, Spanish, Italian and Hindi after school in Sunnyvale and Cupertino, thanks to parents and community members who advocated for the foreign language programs. Many of the programs have been started by native speakers in the area and some are funded by parents, the *San Jose Mercury News* reports. “I think it’s great that the parents really stepped up to make sure these programs are offered to kids,” Cumberland Elementary School principal Peter Fong said. “In this climate, schools are lucky to have music or art when so many are cutting that. Fortunately, our district is able to support these classes and parents then supplement that by funding these programs.”

Missouri – Children in an afterschool chess club in St. Louis are learning the game from a master – a Grandmaster, that is. Grandmaster Ben Finegold, who holds the highest title a chess player can obtain, works with the city’s chess club and its afterschool program to teach community members the art of the game, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reports. The chess club has more than 500 members, and operates an afterschool program in 19 area schools. In January, Finegold played nearly a dozen chess games at once when the community gathered for a chess carnival at the Missouri History Museum.

New York – The New York Philharmonic will perform the works of budding Beethovens as part of a competition held among its [Very Young Composers](#) afterschool program. Students at 14 schools in the area participated in the 13-week afterschool program, learning music theory and composing their own scores, the *New York Daily News* reports. Students submitted their works at the completion of the program, and six pieces were chosen to be performed by the symphony orchestra. “I’m really nervous but really excited too,” said ten-year old Nuha Dolby, whose piece was performed earlier

this month. Hearing the orchestra rehearse the piece “was, like, amazing. It was fantastic and so cool.”

Oregon – The afterschool yoga class at Rosemary Anderson High School is led by an unexpected teacher – the lead guitarist for superstar singer Beyoncé. Bibi McGill is using her time off from a concert tour to teach the class twice a week. The students are “very receptive to yoga,” McGill said. “A lot of times they’ll come in here and they’ll be upset about something that’s happened, and they’ll say, ‘I just need to chill out.’” She was assigned to Rosemary Anderson through [Street Yoga](#), a nonprofit that trains volunteers to teach yoga to troubled and impoverished teenagers, the *Oregonian* reports.



THROUGH YOUR LENS

What do students see when they look at their school building? The second annual [Through Your Lens](#) contest wants to know what they’re proud of, what they’d like to change, and everything in between. Sponsored by the 21st Century School Fund, Healthy Schools Campaign and Critical Exposure, this national photo and essay contest aims to raise awareness of the need to fund school buildings that support learning and provide a safe healthy environment for students and teachers.

Students, teachers and community members may submit photos and stories of their school through February 22. Selected photos will be shared with elected leaders and displayed at a special exhibition in Washington, D.C. Entries will also be published in a *Through Your Lens* book and online gallery.

For more information, click [here](#).



NEW ON THE BLOG!

Hungry for the latest news on 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:

- [Violence Prevention Needs Political Will](#)
- [Representative Kildee on Educating the Whole Child](#)
- [NAEP scores show hands-on science matters](#)

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](#).



RESOURCE SUPPORTING COLLEGE-READINESS

Afterschool programs for older youth that focus on college readiness may want to explore the [Center for Student Opportunity](#) (CSO), a national organization working to empower under-served, first-generation college students to and through college by providing information, guidance, scholarships, and ongoing support.

CSO offers a number of free resources to students and mentors, including:

- [CSO College Center](#): a free college search tool for students to research and connect with colleges and universities that have demonstrated a commitment to serving and supporting students from first-generation, low-income, and minority backgrounds; and
- Opportunity Scholars students who use www.CSOCollegeCenter.org can

click ConnectNow to become CSO Opportunity Scholars by creating a personal profile. This free program helps students to connect with colleges recruiting first-generation, low-income, minority students; receive admissions guidance; and more.

To learn more click [here](#) or contact Cara Martin at info@csopportunity.org.



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Reaction

Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant was critical of the cuts proposed by the House Appropriations Committee. “While we recognize the imperative to cut spending,” she said, “this proposal is short-sighted and harmful. At a time when more than 15 million children in the United States have no safe, supervised activities after the school day ends, and parents are struggling to hold on to their jobs and care for their children, we need to fund more afterschool programs, not close the ones we have. We will [vigorously fight](#) this proposed cut, with support from the strong majority of Americans who support afterschool programs. We intend to remind lawmakers that every quality afterschool program that closes means lost opportunities for students to learn, stress and hardship for working families, and jobs lost.”

By contrast, Grant took a measure of encouragement from the President’s proposal for the coming fiscal year, calling it “a badly needed and very welcome increase.” She continued, “Quality afterschool programs keep children safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. They are invaluable to communities, in high demand from parents, and popular with educators, business and community leaders because they work. But they also face profound funding challenges that have been greatly exacerbated by the recession.”

Noting that “the long-term federal objective with respect to afterschool must be to grow federal support for programs, so that we can eventually meet the vast unmet demand for afterschool,” Grant expressed concern about the President’s plan to open 21st CCLC funds to other programs, declaring that they deserve their own funding streams. “21st CCLC funds should continue to be directed to afterschool, before school and summer programs that focus on hands-on engaged learning,” she said, “and complementing and enhancing but not replicating the traditional school day. Funding should continue to support the partnerships between schools and community- and faith-based organizations that help our children improve academically, socially and behaviorally when their parents are at work. Every single dollar of federal support for afterschool programs makes a difference for children and families.”

What’s Next?

The two proposals frame two giant political battles that will likely last into autumn. The first battle will come quickly. The federal government is currently funded through March 4. Unless Congress passes and the President signs legislation to keep the government running, it will shut down after that and workers will be sent home, government checks will stop, and more. The House will likely pass its 2011 budget plan within the next few days, but the Senate will likely pass a separate funding bill of its own.

Differences in the House and Senate bills would then be addressed by a House-Senate conference committee charged with negotiating a compromise. If that committee succeeds in reaching an agreement, and both houses pass the resulting funding bill, it will go the President for signature or veto. If that process fails, Congress might attempt to pass a short-term funding bill that would continue current funding levels for some fixed period of time, during which it would work again

toward a bill that both chambers can pass and the President can sign.

While all that is going on, the FY 2012 budget process will also get under way. The President's budget proposal is the starting point for that effort, but both houses of Congress will need to pass their own bills – in this case, separate appropriations bills for the major departments of the federal government, including an appropriations bill that funds the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. That process will likely run into late September.

During both processes – the FY 2011 budget debate and the FY 2012 debate to follow – afterschool advocates can play a vital role. “Now is the time to [rally in defense](#) of afterschool programs,” Grant said. “We’re going to need every voice and every supporter if we are to make the progress our children and families need and deserve.”



Capitol Hill continued from page one... involvement. Dr. Pamas considers the 21st CCLC program to be a major contributor to the success of Holmes' students.

Captain Keith Warner of the Harford County, Maryland, Sheriff's Department discussed the recent research exploring the ways afterschool programs contribute to the success of young people, noting that students who participate in afterschool programs are less likely to drop out of school and get involved in juvenile crime. Captain Warner gave specific examples from programs in Harford County that utilize school-community partnerships to engage children in new ways.

Rachel Gwaltney, Chief of Programs at Higher Achievement, said Higher Achievement supports academic achievement for middle school youth, and has helped students attain great outcomes by the end of eighth grade. Its 2009 graduates entered Higher Achievement in fifth grade with an average grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 and

their GPAs rose to 3.1 by the end of eighth grade. Fully 100 percent of Higher Achievement graduates are attending high school and 90 percent are attending top high schools.

With spending cuts on the table this year in Congress, the briefing allowed Senate staff members to hear from program providers and advocates about the positive impact that the 21st CCLC initiative has on students and communities.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

February 23 – 26, 2011

The 14th annual Beyond School Hours conference, hosted by Foundations, Inc., will be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Afterschool advocates will gather for professional development. Participants will also address before- and afterschool, extended day, community-based and summer opportunities, as well as workforce development, higher education, and field-building research. *For information, click [here](#).*

March 10 – 13, 2011

The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) will host the NSTA National Conference on Science Education in San Francisco, California. The conference themes will include: “Embracing Technology in the 21st-Century Classroom;” “Accessing Language through Science and Mathematics Content;” “Exploring Earth, Wind and Fire;” and “Building Scientific Minds: Inspiring Teaching and Effective Learning.” *For more information, click [here](#).*

April 6 – 9, 2011

The National Youth Leadership Council is sponsoring the National Service Learning Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 2,200 people will participate in three days of general sessions, interactive workshops,

thought leader spotlights, service-learning projects, and networking. The conference will include more than 100 exhibits, and more than 200 hands-on workshops and service-learning projects. *For more information, click [here](#).*

 **April 16 – 18, 2011**

The National AfterSchool Association (NAA) will hold its annual convention in Orlando, Florida, featuring more than 200 member-led workshops designed to obtain new ideas, learn best practices, and gather solutions to the challenges in the workplace. The 2011 NAA convention will feature five primary themes focused on the key issues that every afterschool professional faces every day: “STEM Beyond the Classroom;” “Global Learning in Afterschool;” “Advancing the Afterschool Profession;” “Leading Afterschool;” and “Learning in Afterschool.” *For more information, click [here](#).*

 **April 27 – 30, 2011**

The Best Out-of-School Time Collaborative (BOOST) is sponsoring the BOOST Conference in Palm Springs, California. The conference will offer a blend of networking and team-building opportunities, exceptional workshop presenters, and the latest trends and research in out-of-school time programming. More than 125 exhibitors will share the newest resources, products and services to enhance programs. *For more information, click [here](#).*

 **May 16 – 17, 2011**

The Afterschool Alliance will host the 10th annual *Afterschool for All Challenge* in Washington, D.C. The annual event brings together afterschool leaders, advocates, educators and local and state officials to discuss the hottest issues in afterschool, meet with Members of Congress and celebrate afterschool accomplishments. This year's Challenge will highlight one of the hottest topics in afterschool: science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). *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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