



# Afterschool Advocate

A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance

Volume 9, Issue 9, August 26, 2008

## **YELLOW AND GREEN ON 10/16! 2008 LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL**

For the second year in a row, the Empire State Building in New York City will shine a bright yellow in honor of *Lights On Afterschool*. New this year is the addition of some green, with the Afterschool Alliance updating the symbol for *Lights On Afterschool* by replacing the standard incandescent light bulb it has used for eight years with a compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL).

*Lights On Afterschool* is set for Thursday, October 16 this year. It is the only nationwide rally in support of afterschool programs. More than one million children, parents, community leaders and others are expected to participate in events across the country.

The 2008 *Lights On Afterschool* poster features a CFL, and afterschool programs participating in *Lights On Afterschool* will use the new CFL art for decorations and messages to lawmakers about the importance of quality afterschool programs. The 2008 *Lights On Afterschool* poster featuring CFLs was designed by Sarah, a 13-year-old who attends the Young Rembrandts Greater Cleveland-West afterschool program.

“We are so pleased to showcase the wonderful talents of afterschool students by using a poster designed by one of them for *Lights On Afterschool* this year,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “On October 16, all across the country, we will send the message that Americans want to keep the lights on for children – and we’ll do it in an energy-*Lights On continued on page seven...*”

## **ECONOMY, FUEL PRICES AFFECTING BACK TO SCHOOL**

Classrooms, school transportation systems, community centers, libraries, public fields and parks around the country are being prepped for the end of students’ summer break. But many teachers, parents and students will find changed circumstances when they head back to school this year. The economic downturn, coupled with fast-rising energy costs, are forcing school districts to make changes that, in some cases, will affect afterschool programs and the parents and children who rely on them.

### **Limiting Transportation**

Every day, people across the country are waking up to the news that bus routes for schools and afterschool programs have been consolidated or eliminated. Because most school buses run on more expensive diesel fuel, transportation costs have become prohibitive. School districts, especially those in rural communities, are finding their budgets consumed by high-priced gasoline.

To cope, some school systems are cutting back on bus routes, forcing parents to provide transportation or children to walk greater distances. Others are considering ending the extra bus trips to bring children home after their afterschool programs close.

### **A New School Week for Students**

A few school systems have altered the school calendar to offer four-day school weeks, and others are considering that option. In order to comply with state mandates on instructional time, a four-day school week *Back to School continued on seven...*

## OUTREACH

### **Afterschool and the 2008 Election**

While Senators Barack Obama and John McCain have been sharing the spotlight, the president is not the only official voters will choose this November. Across the country, voters also will decide who will join school boards and city councils, run city halls, hold seats in state legislatures and Congress, and more. In one way or another, all these elected officials will make critical decisions affecting afterschool programs. It is essential that they understand how important afterschool programs are to students, families and communities.

The traditional campaign season begins after Labor Day, so this is the perfect time for advocates to contact campaigns and educate candidates at all levels about the benefits of afterschool. Providers should invite candidates from all political parties to programs so they can see the activities that take place after school. They also can host meetings that bring parents, students and candidates together, or invite candidates to participate in *Lights On Afterschool* events.

*The Afterschool Alliance has a variety of election toolkits available on its website at <http://www.kidsdeservebetter.org/reachPolicyElections.cfm>.*

## **AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL**

Currently, *Afterschool for All* totals 19,703 partners who have pledged support for quality, affordable afterschool programming for all youth. The goal this year is to increase the partner list to 28,000, in support of the 28 million children whose parents work outside the home in the United States. Help the Afterschool Alliance reach this important milestone by inviting friends, colleagues, neighbors and family members to sign on to the *Afterschool for All* national petition for afterschool. *It takes less than a minute to sign on at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

New *Afterschool for All* partners include: the University of Kansas; the Wyoming Department of Education in Cheyenne; Boy Scouts of America in Knoxville; Tennessee and Youth Volunteer Corps of America in Mission, Kansas.

If you have questions or comments please contact Marie Coichy, Project Manager, *Afterschool for All* at [mcoichy@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:mcoichy@afterschoolalliance.org) or 646/943-8662.



## 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, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/funding.cfm>.*

### GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

#### Grants for Community Organizations

The Nationwide Foundation is offering Individual Needs grants for community based nonprofit organizations that provide assistance with youth mentoring and financial ability. The application deadline is September 1. *For more information, and to apply, visit <http://www.nationwide.com/about-us/about-nationwide-foundation.jsp>.*

#### Grants for Books

The Lois Lenski Covey Foundation, Inc. is sponsoring grants to provide books to rural, urban, public and school libraries that serve at-risk children who lack access to literature. Grants are for \$500 to \$3,000. The application deadline is September 15. *For more information, visit <http://www.loislenskicovey.org/>.*

#### Grants for Landscaping Projects

Wild Ones is sponsoring Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grants to help schools and nature centers plant and maintain natural landscapes. Grants are available for \$100 to \$500. The application deadline is November 15. *For more information, visit <http://www.for-wild.org/seededuc.html>.*

#### Grants for American History and Culture Education

The Picturing America program of the National Endowment for the Humanities is offering resources to schools and public libraries to advance students' understanding of American history and culture. Grantees will receive laminated reproductions of American art and illustrated teacher resource books. The application deadline is October 31. *For more information, visit <http://picturingamerica.neh.gov>.*



## WHAT'S YOUR AFTERSCHOOL STORY?

This fall, the Afterschool Alliance will unveil a groundbreaking online initiative to celebrate the diversity, depth and power of the afterschool experience in America today. The Afterschool Storybook project will highlight how afterschool programs are improving the lives of children and parents, and enriching communities. In advance of the Storybook's launch, the Afterschool Alliance is collecting powerful stories from each state. *To enter your story, please go to <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/storybook/>. To view sample stories contained in the Afterschool Storybook, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/storybook/samples.cfm>.*

## AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITY IN CONGRESS

Before going home for the August break, Members of Congress took a number of steps in support of afterschool. Senators Evan Bayh (D-IN) and John Thune (R-SD), and Reps. Jim Cooper (D-TN), Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL) and Bill Foster (D-IL) recently joined the Congressional Afterschool Caucuses, which now boast 128 members – 90 Representatives and 38 Senators. *To view a complete Afterschool Caucus Member list, please visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyCongressionalCaucuses.cfm>.*

### TIME Act

On August 1, Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), along with Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Bernie Sanders (I-VT), introduced the Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act, S.3431. If passed, it would establish a

federal expanded learning time pilot project to lengthen the school day, week and/or year. The Afterschool Alliance provided comments on the bill and helped ensure that it addresses issues important to the afterschool community.

The legislation focuses on increasing time for both academic and “enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education,” including music, arts, physical education, service-learning, and work-based learning opportunities. In addition, strong language on partnerships, community learning centers and afterschool is incorporated in the bill in meaningful ways.

One of its explicit purposes is “to create partnerships between schools and local educational agencies, and external organizations such as community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, community learning centers, cultural organizations, and health and mental health agencies to provide expanded learning and development opportunities for students.”

If it is passed and funded, priority for grants will be given to applications that serve high need students and that include a community-based organization, institution of higher education, community learning center, or an entity carrying out an afterschool program. Applications must include an assurance that afterschool services will be provided for students participating in the expanded learning time initiative.

### Higher Education Opportunity Act

After years of debate, on July 31 Congress reauthorized the Higher Education Opportunity Act and President Bush signed it into law on August 14. Of special interest is that the bill reauthorizes college access programs including TRIO and GEAR Up, and places an emphasis on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education programs.

In addition, Title II of the law, which addresses teacher preparation programs, is

significantly revamped and includes a number of new early childhood provisions supported by the afterschool community, as well as a focus on recruiting early childhood educators, and more and better professional development.

### New Survey

Looking to the future of schools in a changed economy, on July 30 lawmakers led by House Minority leader John Boehner (R-OH) and House Education and Labor Committee Ranking Member Buck McKeon (R-CA) announced a new Back to School online survey. The initiative seeks input from school officials, teachers, parents and community members on how energy costs are affecting their schools.

Results will be available this fall. Afterschool leaders should respond to the survey to ensure that the experiences of afterschool programs – especially in those communities struggling because of the economic downturn – are factored into the results. *The brief survey is available at <http://republicans.edlabor.house.gov/energysurvey.shtml>.*



### IN THE NEWS...

**National** – A study of nearly 70,000 children in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* finds that immigrant children of all backgrounds get even less vigorous exercise than their U.S. born counterparts. Immigrant children in general are poorer than non-immigrants and live in less safe neighborhoods with less access to outdoor recreational areas. The study concludes that immigrant parents tend to emphasize reading, language lessons, studying and other less active pursuits, and are less likely to emphasize exercise.

**California** – Students in the Life Enrichment Course, a summer program in Ashland, spent

the summer with senior volunteers from the United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County and the Associated Community Action Program. The *Contra Costa Times* reports that the seniors enjoyed spending time with the youth and sharing their knowledge. “This experience has been really good for me and has given me an opportunity to interact with younger kids,” Carol Sugimura, 62, told the *Times*. The students learned life skills, gardening, nutrition, and leadership.

**Hawaii** – Recent budget constraints have the State Board of Education considering a 25 percent cut to athletics that would eliminate junior varsity sports at public schools, as well as some varsity sports. Cuts would affect judo, football, volleyball and basketball as well as “A-Plus” afterschool programs. According to the *Associated Press*, if approved the cuts would be implemented for the 2009/2010 school year.

**Kentucky** – In June, the state Juvenile Justice Department notified community centers and afterschool programs that their funding would be eliminated due to budget cuts. In early August, the Department notified the same programs that it would be able to provide limited funding, totaling \$850,000. Last year programs received \$2.4 million, but nonetheless leaders were pleased to receive some money which will allow some to continue operating as they search for alternative funding, reports the *Courier Journal*. “I wish we could give them more, but that’s all I have,” Juvenile Justice Commissioner Ron Haws said.

**New Mexico** – The Santa Fe City Council recently voted unanimously to allow students free access to city buses to help them move around the city and lessen congestion on the roads, reports the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. The Council vote was prompted by a 2007 Santa Fe needs assessment report which found that teenagers were constrained from participating in afterschool programs and

other out-of-school-time activities because they lacked transportation. The change will take effect as soon as the city has informed all bus drivers.

**Rhode Island** – Teenagers from inner city schools in Providence, some who had never set foot on a boat, recently took part in the first Mayor’s Cup sailing regatta in Narragansett Bay. The event stemmed from collaboration between the Providence After School Alliance and the Community Boating Center. “Some of these kids didn’t realize that Providence was a waterfront city until they came to us, and that’s no joke,” John O’Flaherty, Executive Director of the Boating Center, told the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*. The same youth were captaining 22-foot sailing vessels by summer’s end.

**Wisconsin** – The State Department of Public Instruction recently announced a new grant allocated under the *No Child Left Behind Act* that will help educators teach immigrant children. The grant funds a summer program to help newly arrived immigrant children with language acquisition, with a focus on children who speak less common languages such as those from Somalia or Myanmar. The Milwaukee Public School system will receive the largest portion of the grant, reports the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, to help schools that have had limited experience dealing with immigrant children.



## 2008 WILLIAM S. WHITE AWARDS

One very special event at this year’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers Summer Institute in Dallas was the presentation of two William S. White Achievement Awards for service to children, schools and communities. In recognition of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Community Learning Centers initiative (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC), the awards were given to Holyoke Public Schools, CONNECTIONS 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program in Massachusetts; and Pawtucket School Department Child Opportunity Zone (COZ), 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program in Rhode Island. Meaningful partnerships, data-driven decision-making, coordination with day school curriculum and an ongoing commitment to creating a diverse and stable funding base were cited for the selection of the Pawtucket and Holyoke programs.

“As an urban high poverty school district, Holyoke faces the daily challenge of trying to close the achievement gap for students that are at risk both academically and developmentally,” said Eileen Cavanaugh, director of the Connections Program, which just completed its sixth year of operation. “We are pleased to be recognized for our efforts in providing academic enrichment opportunities to Holyoke youth and to be able to play a role in not only helping to educate them, but also in providing a model for how schools and community organizations can come together in partnership.”

The Pawtucket School Department’s COZ program first came to the attention of the Rhode Island Department of Education more than ten years ago, according to Jackie Ascrizzi, who with George McDonough manages the states 21st Century CCLC Initiative. COZ, a community school model, is the organizational umbrella for the districts 21st Century CCLC programs.

“COZ staff demonstrated their commitment to an integrated service approach by bringing health, social and education services on-site to meet the needs of children, youth and their families,” Ascrizzi said.

“We appreciate being recognized for our hard work addressing the academic and social needs of our children and youth – and we intend to continue working with the schools and our community partners to close the achievement gap of our urban students,” said

Mary Parella, COZ program director. The afterschool and summer programs have grown in the last several years to serve more than 1,200 children and youth in 11 elementary, middle and high schools, generating significant parent support.

Nominations for the award were limited to recipients of 21st Century CCLC grants, in honor of the tenth anniversary of the 21st Century CCLC initiative.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Mott Foundation, in conjunction with the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, the Summer Institute brings together diverse leaders who work with and in afterschool programs at the local, state, and national levels. The William S. White Achievement Award was established in 2005 and first given to White, the President of the C.S. Mott Foundation who led the Foundation in coordinating a partnership with the U.S. Department of Education and the corporate community to provide enrichment and learning opportunities for children through the 21st Century CCLC initiative.

## CALIFORNIA UPDATE

The California Afterschool Network reports that SB 1674 has passed on the Senate Floor, passed on the Assembly Education Committee and most recently passed a full floor vote of the Assembly. The bill will be returned to the Senate for amendment concurrence and then submitted to the Governor for signature. It authorizes weekend activities in the After School Education and Safety Program and establishes the California After School Teacher Pipeline pilot program.

*Lights On continued from page one...*  
conscious way. Supporting afterschool programs and conserving energy both help ensure a better future for our youth.”

This year’s *Lights On Afterschool* events on October 16 will mark the end of a year-long celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool programs. To commemorate the anniversary, the Alliance will unveil an Afterschool Storybook featuring the stories of diverse people whose lives have been improved by afterschool programs.

“Afterschool programs give children safe places to go with educational, enriching activities after the school day ends,” Grant added. “At *Lights On Afterschool* events, Americans will send the message that families need quality afterschool programs, especially during tough economic times like these.”

The ninth annual *Lights On Afterschool* will include rallies throughout the nation and at United States military bases around the world. These events give youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and the talents they develop at their afterschool programs.

*Lights On Afterschool* was launched in October 2000. Last year, a million people rallied at 7,500 events to show their support for afterschool programs. Actress Rhea Perlman is a spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National Chair, a position he has held since 2001.

Register your *Lights On Afterschool* events on the Afterschool Alliance’s website, at [www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm) and receive free posters. The website also features tips and resources to help plan successful events.

To check out the Afterschool Storybook and post a story, please visit [www.afterschoolalliance.org/storybook/](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/storybook/).



*Back to School continued from page one...*  
generally requires a longer school day and/or a longer school year.

Some working parents in these districts are concerned about care for their children

when schools are out – both because there still is a gap between when the longer school day ends and when parents get home from work, and because many working parents have no supervised activities for their children on the weekdays (usually Fridays or Mondays) when schools will now be closed. Afterschool programs are trying to meet the need, with some looking into opening all day on Fridays or Mondays when schools will be closed.

“In some communities, the traditional school day may be changing,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Rising energy costs coupled with tight budgets are posing new challenges for working families. Afterschool programs are doing their best to help families meet those challenges, but they will need resources in order to do so. We must not let these changes cause more children and youth to be unsupervised and at risk during out-of-school time.”

### **A New Work Week for Parents**

The four-day week is being considered by employers as well as school systems, again with implications for afterschool programs. On August 4, Utah became the first state to mandate a four-day work week for more than 17,000 employees in the executive branch. State employees work ten-hour days, Monday through Thursday, and have Fridays off. The move is intended to reduce the state’s energy bill to heat, light and cool buildings, and to save employees fuel costs. But working parents have been left to find their own arrangements for children during the extra hours they are at work.

State agencies in Alabama, Hawaii, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Vermont and West Virginia are among those also considering four-day work weeks.

### **‘Pay to Play’ on Public Fields**

In addition, New York and Los Angeles are among the jurisdictions in which students are facing new “pay to play” fees in certain

parks and school fields, because pinched parks and recreation department officials say they must charge for usage in order to keep the fields open. Leaders of organized sports leagues and others warn that parents cannot afford to pay these fees, so fewer youth will be able to participate in after school sports. Already, there is evidence of much lower participation in Los Angeles.

“Smaller budgets can mean fewer options for students outside of the school day,” Grant added. “Some communities are confronting radical policy changes faster than they can respond. Four-day school or work weeks, elimination of bus routes, and new fees for programs all pose challenges for parents. As the new school year begins, many programs may find greater demand and even fewer resources to respond to the need. Now more than ever, we must press for increased funding for afterschool.”

*If your afterschool program is making adjustments to deal with changing school or work schedules, we want to hear from you! Please email [advocate@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:advocate@afterschoolalliance.org) with information.*



## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS...**

### **September 17 - 19, 2008**

The Coalition for Science After School will host the National Conference on Science and Technology for Out-of-School Time in Chicago, Illinois. Sessions will address best practices and curriculum development and highlight equity and access issues for underrepresented populations. *For more information, visit [www.scienceafterschoolconference.org/](http://www.scienceafterschoolconference.org/).*

### **October 2 - 4, 2008**

National Safe Place and the Southeastern Network member agencies are sponsoring the Building a Safety Net for Youth Conference in Louisville, Kentucky. Conference topics



include community and street outreach, and fundraising and development. *For more information, visit <http://nationalsafeplace.org/>.*

 **October 16, 2008**

The Afterschool Alliance will sponsor the 9<sup>th</sup> annual *Lights On Afterschool*. The Empire State Building in New York City will be lit up in honor of *Lights On Afterschool*. This year's celebration will mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers federal afterschool initiative. *To host a Lights On Afterschool event at your program or in your community, and for more information, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm>.*

 **October 17, 2008**

The Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance will host the 2008 statewide afterschool conference in Providence, Rhode Island. The event will take place at the Providence Marriott and will include a keynote speech and book signing by Erin Gruwell, author of *The Freedom Writers Diary*. The event also will feature workshops and student performances. *For more information and to register, visit <http://www.afterschoolri.org/>.*

 **November 5 - 6, 2008**

The Best Out-of-School Time Conference will host a High School Summit in San Diego, California. The conference will focus on high school afterschool programming. Session proposals are now being accepted. *For more information, visit <http://www.boostconference.org/booster/>.*

 **November 14 - 15, 2008**

The New Jersey School-Age Care Coalition will sponsor the annual state afterschool conference "Outdoors in the Garden State," in Princeton, New Jersey. The focus of the conference will be to create linkages between children and youth in afterschool programs and nature and outdoor experiences. There will be 70 workshops, one-third of which will focus on nature and the outdoors. *For more information, visit <http://www.njsacc.org/index.php>.*

**\*\*\* And mark your calendars now for the *Afterschool for All Challenge* to be held April 27 and 28, 2009, in Washington, D.C.! \*\*\***




---

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](http://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.

\*\*\*\*\*

The *Afterschool Advocate* is produced for the Afterschool Alliance by PR Solutions, Inc., Washington, DC;  
Phone: 202/371-1999; Fax: 202/371-9142; E-mail: [advocate@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:advocate@afterschoolalliance.org).

---