



For Immediate Release
March 21, 2025

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202/371-1997

Is the Future of Federal Afterschool Funding Secure?

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

“The afterschool community has watched closely in recent weeks as the administration cut staff and yesterday moved to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education. The Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) – the chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs – is administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The funding flows by formula to state education agencies and then competitively to local communities, where it currently supports 1.4 million students in nearly 10,000 communities. 21stCCLC is authorized and mandated in law as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Therefore, we expect its grants to states, and their grants to individual programs, to continue.

They should. For more than 25 years, 21st CCLC has provided students across the country with quality afterschool and summer learning programs each year, building a strong track record of keeping our kids safe, inspiring them to learn, and giving working families peace of mind that their children are safe and supervised after the school day ends. Public support for the programs that 21st CCLC supports is overwhelming. In a December [public opinion poll](#), 85% of voters said public funding for these programs should increase, and 87% agreed that afterschool programs are an absolute necessity for communities, with more than 80% of voters in every demographic and political group agreeing with that statement.

21st CCLC and the programs it supports have benefited because the federal Department of Education provides oversight and technical assistance to the 50 state agencies responsible for state decisions about distributing its funds. The Department also coordinates program evaluation, provides guidance that helps states interpret the federal statute, and offers quality support to state agencies and local afterschool and summer learning programs through the National Technical Assistance Center. It will be essential for all that to continue.

This work has paid off. The [latest report](#) from the U.S. Department of Education shows that participation in 21st CCLC is associated with improved outcomes for children and youth.

In addition to keeping 21st CCLC robust and strong, our country must do much more to fund the afterschool and summer learning programs children and families rely on. Today in the United States, for every child in an afterschool program, four more are waiting to get in. The afterschool community will mobilize parents and supporters to change that this year.”

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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.