



For Immediate Release  
August 10, 2021

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## **House-Approved 21st CCLC Appropriation Would Support Afterschool for 100,000 More Children and Youth**

### ***Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance***

“The House’s recent move to pass the FY 2022 Labor, HHS, Education spending bill, which increased funding for the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) initiative, is a welcome step toward making afterschool and summer learning programs available to all children and youth who need them. If it is approved by the Senate and signed by President Biden, an additional 100,000 students will have the afterschool programs they need to learn and thrive. We thank House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro, the bipartisan House Afterschool Caucus and its Co-Chairs, Representatives David Cicilline and Don Young, and all members of Congress on both sides of the aisle who worked in support of afterschool and summer learning programs this session.

Over the course of the pandemic, out-of-school-time (OST) programs responded heroically to a range of community needs – caring for the children of first responders, providing meals to families that would otherwise have gone without, connecting students and families to a range of social services, and more. Many programs opened their doors to care for and supervise students taking virtual classes, allowing parents to keep their jobs. That vital work continues to this day, with strict safety protocols remaining in place because many children are not old enough for a COVID vaccine.

The House appropriation adds \$100 million to the program's funding – \$50 million beyond President Biden's proposal – bringing the total 21st CCLC appropriation to \$1.4 billion. It is the only dedicated funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs, currently supporting afterschool for 1.66 million children, a number that would rise to 1.76 million if this budget is signed into law. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is absolutely vital to families and communities across the nation, now more than ever. Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give parents peace of mind that their children are safe, supervised, and learning after the school day ends and until they return home from their jobs. Students unsupervised after school are at increased risk for falling behind, dropping out, and engaging in risky behaviors.

For all those reasons, we must do more. Even before the pandemic, [the families of 24.6 million children](#) were unable to access an afterschool program, with low-income, Black and Latinx families most likely to be left behind. For every student in an afterschool program, three more were waiting to get in. So, while increasing funding by 7% is a terrific first step, there is much more to do. Millions of children will still be without the afterschool and summer learning programs their parents know they need.

For now, the afterschool community will work hard to convince the Senate to approve the House-passed funding level for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, while continuing to work over time to persuade Congress and the White

House that our country's children and youth deserve a much greater federal investment. The American Rescue Plan has provided an important but temporary boost for OST programs, but recovery and the growth we need will take more time and resources."

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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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*