



MEDIA ADVISORY
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Leading Children's, Education Advocates to Brief Congress on Ways Afterschool Programs Support Rural Communities

One-fifth of the nation's children attend public schools in rural communities – areas that persistently have the highest poverty rates, and where children often face social isolation, lack of positive role models and scarce opportunities. Leading children's and afterschool advocates will brief Members of Congress and their aides on the ways afterschool programs can help children in rural communities realize their full potential, and the challenges those communities face in providing these programs. The briefing is open to media. It will be held:

Monday, February 11
1:00 – 2:30 PM
Capitol Building, Room HC-8
WITH

Mark Shriver, President and Managing Director, U.S. Programs, Save the Children
Jimmy Cunningham, Superintendent, Danville Public Schools (Arkansas)
Charles Harrington, Director, Maine Sea Coast Mission / The EdGE
Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

Rural schools have lower median per-student funding for afterschool programs under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) federal grants initiative than their urban and suburban counterparts. Additionally, rural schools have fewer financial resources – largely as a result of diminished local property tax bases and inequitable distribution of state funds. Despite this, President Bush has recently proposed slashing funding for the 21st CCLC and converting it to a risky and unwise voucher program.

The briefing is sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance, American Association of School Administrators, Save the Children, National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition and National Center for Family Literacy, in conjunction with the House and Senate Afterschool Caucuses.

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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.