



# The Collaborative for Building After-School Systems

July 17, 2013

The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline:

The Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS) writes to comment on H.R.5, the Student Success Act. While we appreciate that the Student Success Act would provide dedicated funding for high-quality academic tutoring as part of Direct Student Services (section 1003A) and ensure partnerships between local educational agencies and community-based organizations under the Local Academic Flexible Grant (Title III, Part B), we have serious concerns about the impact of your legislation and must express our strong opposition to provisions that would consolidate the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program into a block grant.

CBASS is a coalition of twelve intermediary organizations in cities and regions nationwide dedicated to increasing the availability of quality expanded learning opportunities. We believe in strong partnerships between schools and community partners that increase learning time through a full range of enrichment opportunities before or after the traditional school day and during summer.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Maintain 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC as a Stand-Alone Program.** The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide critical academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. There is a robust body of strong research showing that after-school, before school and summer programs are effective in improving student outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Particularly, the program helps students meet state and local

<sup>1</sup> George, R.; Cusick, G.; Wasserman, M.; & Gladden, R. (2007). *After-School Programs and Academic Impact: A Study of Chicago's After School Matters*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago.  
Reisner, E.; White, R.; Russell, C.; & Birmingham, J. (2004). *Building Quality, Scale and Effectiveness in After-School Programs*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates.  
Kauh, Tina. (2011) *AfterZone: Outcomes for Youth Participating in Providence's Citywide After-School Systems*. Philadelphia, PA. Public/Private Ventures.

## OUR PARTNERS

After School Matters  
Chicago, IL

Baltimore's Safe  
and Sound Campaign  
Baltimore, MD

Boston After  
School & Beyond  
Boston, MA

Hartford Partnership  
for Student Success  
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Children & Youth  
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Youth Development  
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Providence After  
School Alliance  
Providence, RI

Prime Time Palm  
Beach County, Inc.  
Oakland, CA

The After-School  
Corporation (TASC)  
New York, NY

The After-School Institute  
Baltimore, MD

Youthprise  
Twin Cities, MN

student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

Because the expanded learning programs we support through 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC improve student engagement and achievement, we are troubled that the *Student Success Act* consolidates this successful program that currently serves over a million students and is the only federal education funding solely dedicated to supporting before school, after school, and summer learning programs. Accordingly, we strongly recommend that the *Student Success Act* maintain a separate funding stream for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program under the same structure as current law of ESEA.

**Ensure that 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Offers High-Quality Programming.** We believe the program should be updated to:

*Ensure that programs have the capacity to succeed by strengthening the role of intermediaries to support systems-building efforts.* Districts and community partners need co-management capacity in order to leverage the strengths of external entities. Expanded learning opportunity programs need extra support to meet their goals and help all students achieve. Providers often lack resources, training, systems, and strategies to succeed. Intermediaries help schools and nonprofits excel at direct student services, while providing the wrap-around services needed to build capacity, sustain and grow scalable programs, and get results. There is a need to build capacity and systems across programs to increase the return on investment, ensure sustainability, and improve results.

*Ensure partners are included in professional development activities.* In order to implement successful expanded learning opportunity programs, it is important to allow joint professional development for teachers and expanded learning time partners that work with the districts. This allows schools and providers to work together to ensure that students are receiving the support and specific interventions they need to succeed.

*Ensure that local communities have full authority without state or federal preference or direction to make their own decisions about whether to use 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds for (1) after school, (2) summer learning programs, (3) before school, and/or (4) expanded learning programs.*

Unfortunately, too many children across the country do not have access to high quality expanded learning opportunities. Over 18 million parents<sup>2</sup> say they would enroll their child in an afterschool program if one were available to them. That is why dedicated, federal funding for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program and other student-based academic and enrichment services are necessary if we truly want to improve academic achievement, reduce the dropout crisis, and turn around our nation's low-achieving schools.

We want to work with you to ensure that the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program supports the highest-quality learning and enrichment programs to promote full day learning strategies. In order to achieve that goal, we would like to work with you as the process moves forward to ensure that the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is the strongest support for expanded learning possible.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations. Please contact me at [jdonner@tascorp.org](mailto:jdonner@tascorp.org) or (646) 943-8738, if you would like further information or have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessica Donner".

Jessica Donner  
Director

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<sup>2</sup> Afterschool Alliance. *America after 3pm: Key Findings*. Washington DC: Author. Available at: [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM\\_Key\\_Findings\\_2009.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM_Key_Findings_2009.pdf)