

Trends in Federal After School Policy

Katie Brackenridge

Director, Out of School Time Initiatives

Partnership for Children and Youth

Connecting Communities and Schools to Resources
So **Every Child** Can Thrive.



Overview

- What is ESEA and Why Does It Matter?
- Federal Process to Date
- What's Next
- Opportunities for Input



What is ESEA?

Elementary Secondary Education Act

- First enacted in 1965
- Includes all major K-12 education programs such as Title I, 21st CCLC, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools
 - (Does not include IDEA, however)



ESEA

- Reauthorized every five to 10 years
- The last reauthorization was in 2002 (No Child Left Behind)
- In 2007, House Education Committee created a draft for a new reauthorization, but the process stalled.



Federal Process to Date

March 15, 2010

President Obama released, “A blueprint for reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act”



Federal Process to Date

2009

Educational Stakeholder Forums

The U.S. Department of Education held public hearings on:

- Effective teaching
- Measurement of progress
- Current Dept of Ed work on ESEA



Federal Process to Date

U.S. Department of Education also held forums on the education portions of:

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
- Race to the Top Fund
- Investing in Innovation Fund
- The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund
- The FY2011 budget



Federal Process to Date

House and Senate Education Committees have held numerous hearings that will continue throughout May.



House and Senate Education Committees

Input from Advocates

- The House Education and Labor Committee welcomed feedback from interested stakeholders regarding ESEA reauthorization until March 26th.
- The Senate Health Education and Labor Committee has asked for feedback from interested stakeholders regarding ESEA reauthorization **by May 7, 2010** to: ESEAComments@help.senate.gov.



President's Proposals

New category of programs called “Safe and Healthy Students”

- Promise Neighborhoods
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Successful, Safe and Healthy Students



President's proposal for 21st CCLC

- Competitive grants for states, school districts, non profits and partnerships
- Could be various models including before/after school, community school, extended day, week or year
- Focus on improving student academic achievement in core subjects



How is California Weighing In?

California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA3)

An informal coalition of organizations that have the interest, ability and resources to lobby on state and federal policy



How is California Weighing In?

Process for Developing ESEA Recommendations

- Started with key issues from grantees
- Solicited feedback from CA3 members
- Consultation with after school org's in other cities/states



How is California Weighing In?

Communication with Congress

- Recommendations submitted to Chairman Miller and Senator Boxer
- Follow-up meetings
- Responding to questions



How is California Weighing In?

Review Recommendations and Group
Feedback



Remainder of 2010—2011

- **Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA)**, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, and **Rep. George Miller (D-CA)**, Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, have both said they would like to move ESEA reauthorization this year, but acknowledge delays are possible.
- If not reauthorized before the August congressional recess, unlikely reauthorization for this year.



Opportunities for Input

How to Get Engaged

- Stay informed through organizations such as LCAP
- Share your perspectives with your Congressional representative with a letter to their Washington office.



Opportunities for Input

How to Get Engaged

- **Invite** your Congressperson to visit a program.
- Participate in local, state and national Advocacy Days.



After ESEA

How Can California Implement Changes to 21st CCLC?

- Organize to make strong case for increased federal funding, particularly in light of policy changes.
- Federal changes will necessitate changes to state 21st CCLC law.



After ESEA

How Can California Implement Changes to 21st CCLC?

- Influence the federal regulatory process if useful.
- Advocate for strong state regulations and policies for implementation working with the legislature, governor and superintendent.



Questions?

Connecting Communities and Schools to Resources
So **Every Child** Can Thrive.



PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Thank You

Katie Brackenridge

Director, Out of School Time Initiatives

Partnership for Children and Youth

Connecting Communities and Schools to Resources
So **Every Child** Can Thrive.



MEMORANDUM

May 13, 2010

TO: Chairman Miller, House Education and Labor committee

FR: California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA 3)

RE: Comments on the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

On behalf of the California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA 3), a coalition of organizations that work to expand access to quality after school, nutrition and health programs in the most disadvantaged communities throughout California, we are pleased to submit comments on the pending reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The core of our recommendations are in regards to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), the main funding stream for high-quality afterschool programs that provide academic enrichment opportunities for large numbers of children.

Response to the President's ESEA Proposal "A Blueprint for Reform"

While we understand that Congress will take its own approach to the reauthorization of ESEA, we wanted to take this opportunity to directly address the proposals outlined in President's Obama's "*A Blueprint for Reform*."

Overall, we applaud the President's Blueprint for several reasons. We are glad to see a connection made between the 21st CCLC and the larger goal of safer and healthier schools. The proposal also appears to expand the scope of allowable services under 21st CCLC to include the broad array of services children might need such as academic, enrichment, health, and nutrition. We are pleased to see that the proposal recognizes the importance of community schools, which benefit students and families by providing them with more comprehensive services. Lastly, we are pleased that the Blueprint ensures that nonprofits are included under the 21st CCLC program, but we are concerned they may not be able to be the lead applicant with schools as partners. We continue to believe school districts and community-based organizations (CBOs) should work in partnership, and that both should be eligible entities within 21st CCLC. The unique relationship that CBOs have within the community, and the distinct services that community partners offer, are critical to success.¹ In fact, in some California communities, the LEA has chosen not to take on the lead agency role because they have too many responsibilities and challenges in front of them and have decided that a local community partner is much better equipped to manage and provide high-quality academic enrichment programming. Community partners who offer high-quality programs, such as L.A.'s BEST, Woodcraft Rangers, Afterschool Allstars and our many, many Boys and Girls Clubs have shown to improve community and family involvement, academic outcomes, student engagement in school and social development.

¹ Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2007). The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills. Retrieved March 20, 2007, from <http://www.CASEL.org>

However, we have some serious concerns that we would like to see addressed.

Ensure a strong definition of “increased learning time” or “extended learning time”

CA3 is concerned that the proposal may result in favoring extended day, week or school year programs that are narrowly defined extensions of the traditional school day. We believe that increased learning time should include a variety of high-quality and effective strategies—including afterschool, before school, summer, and extended day, week or year—that are run collaboratively with school and community partners and offer students alternative, engaging learning strategies. The exact approach to increasing learning time should be a community-based decision, not a federal, top-down mandate.

In fact, there is strong research showing that summer,² before school, and after school³ programs are effective ways to increase learning time and improve student outcomes. Communities should be able to choose the solution that best meets their needs – and particularly in a state as large as California with an enormously broad range of community needs, languages, assets and innovations as well as challenges, it is absolutely critical that communities have the flexibility that is essential for local innovation and local success.

Enhance current state infrastructures, don’t waste them

The President’s proposal shifts away from the current formula-based 21st CCLC state program model. Over the past decade, states have spent enormous time and resources to build an infrastructure to support districts and community-based approaches to expanding learning and enrichment opportunities for students beyond the regular school day. While we agree that states can improve their structures and services, we also believe that these resources should not simply be abandoned. For example, in California, our 21st CCLC program is an important complement to our state funded Afterschool Education and Safety Program – and there is significant leveraging and coordination of training and technical assistance across these two programs. We should leverage these infrastructures to support improvements in quality and effectiveness, not dismantle them.

Comprehensive ESEA Recommendations

Maintain critical components of the 21st CCLC program that have proven successful in improving outcomes and supports for the lowest income students.

- Ensure that school districts and non-profits are both eligible to receive grants under the program to ensure that students in every community – rural, urban, or suburban – have the opportunity to attend programs that meet their needs.

² Cooper, H., Nye, B., Charlton, K., Lindsay, J., Greathouse, S. (1996). The effects of summer vacation on achievement test scores: A narrative and meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 66, 227-268. Also see: Miller, B.M. (2007). *The learning season: The untapped power of summer to advance student achievement*. Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation. Available at: http://www.nmefdn.org/uploads/Learning%20Season_FULLL06.pdf. And: Chaplin, D. and J. Capizzano. (2006). *Impacts of a Summer Learning Program: A Random Assignment Study of Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL)*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. Available at: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411350_bell_impacts.pdf

³ Vandell, D., Reisner, E. and K. Pierce (2007). *Outcomes linked to high-quality afterschool programs: longitudinal findings from the study of promising afterschool programs*. University of California, Irvine. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Policy Studies Associates, Inc. Also see: Reisner, E. R.; White, R. N.; Russell, C. A; Birmingham, J. (2004) *Building Quality, Scale, Effectiveness in After-School Programs: Summary Report of the TASC Evaluation*. Goerge, 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. Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2007). The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills. Retrieved March 20, 2007, from <http://www.CASEL.org>

- Ensure that communities are able to meet the goal of “increasing learning time” through a variety of high-quality and effective strategies for boosting learning and enrichment including afterschool, before school, summer, and extended day, week or year. However the extension of the day, week or year, must be engaging and challenging and connect to community partners, and not be more of the same from the typical school day.
- Improve current state role in the program by increasing quality and accountability measures but do not do away with the significant infrastructure that has been created to help communities expand learning and enrichment opportunities for students beyond the regular school day.

Refocus the 21st CCLC Program on Enriching and Enhancing Learning and Addressing Community Needs

Strengthen community learning centers to support their most comprehensive and effective use

- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including alternative methods of teaching and learning and a broad range of services and activities that promote healthy development and help students stay in school, engage in learning, and stay on the path to achieving state and local student academic achievement standards in all subjects during all the times when they need care and support, including before school, after school, summer, and long holiday breaks.
- Ensure that programs do not replicate but rather complement the regular school day, by offering a range of activities that capture student interest (e.g., hands on science projects, the arts, planning for careers and college, use of technology) and support student engagement which can promote higher class attendance, reduce risk for retention or dropout, and increase the chance for graduation.⁴

Expand Access to Programs for All Eligible Grantees

- Streamline and simplify the application process to ensure all eligible grantees can apply.
- Provide technical assistance to CBOs, small schools and small, rural districts that do not have large staff nor the capacity to hire grant writers.
- Provide incentives for applicants from rural or small schools/districts to work across districts and with community partners in order to submit consolidated applications to streamline paperwork and increase capacity for impact.

Increase Flexibility to Meet Communities’ Needs

- Allow nutrition education and physical activity as core activities.
- Allow communities to run year-round programs to help keep children engaged, safe and off the streets.

Improve the quality of programs

- Allow state and local funds, including funds under Title II of ESEA (or any teacher and principal effectiveness program), to be used for training and professional development of after school staff to ensure that children are receiving high quality learning and enrichment activities.
- Support continued operation of quality after school programs by allowing grant renewal for programs that demonstrate grant compliance and program effectiveness (renewable for a period of not less than 3 years and not more than 5 years based on grant performance).

⁴ See George, R.M., G.R. Cusick, M. Wasserman, and R.M. Gladden (2007). *After-School Programs and Academic Impact: A Study Of Chicago’s After School Matters*. www.Chapinhall.Org/Article_Abstract.aspx?Ar=1444. See also Lauver, S., Little, P.M.D., and H. Weiss (2004). *Moving Beyond the Barriers: Attracting and Sustaining Youth Participation in Out-of-School Time Programs*, Issue Brief No. 6. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/issuebrief6.html.

- Give competitive priority to applications developed and submitted jointly by school districts and community-based partners. Require partnerships to provide documented evidence that partners collaborated on the application and agree to the plans for implementation and program operation.

Increase Coordination of In-School and Out-of-School Activities to Ensure that the Learning Experiences of Children Are Complementary

- Ensure deliberate coordination of other education funding streams with out-of-school programs to maximize efficiencies, cost-effectiveness and continuity of learning for children.
- Require Title I programs to coordinate their curriculum and activities with after school programs to ensure that the after school enrichment programs support and enhance classroom learning
- Build on ARRA Title I guidance by including language explicitly listing afterschool and summer learning as an allowable use of funds.

Improve data collection and reporting on the use of 21st CCLC funds to close the achievement gap

- After school program data, including longitudinal data from 21st CCLC programs, should be included and shared in comprehensive state- and district-wide longitudinal data systems to allow for improved program evaluation and for better coordination of services among youth-serving agencies such as community-based partners, schools, districts, and states.
- Require states and districts to collect data and report on the amount of federal funds used from Title I, 21st CCLC, and IDEA, and the number of children served, through afterschool and summer learning programs.

Increase Accountability Aligned to Measurable Program Goals

- Hold states, schools and community-based organizations accountable for effectiveness through appropriate, measurable outcomes;
- Ensure that measures of student success include indicators such as improved attendance, better classroom grades, increased class participation, positive attitude toward school, and overall educational attainment.

Increase funding to meet the demand

- Increase funding for quality after school programs within 21st CCLC. Currently, we are only serving a fraction of the 15.1 million children who continue to be unsupervised and at risk after the school day ends. Evaluations show 21st CCLC programs contribute to improved student outcomes. Over 146 independent studies show positive academic and behavioral outcomes linked to graduation and student success. We need to continue to increase funding for the 21st CCLC to meet high demand and help all children graduate prepared for college and work.

Expand supplemental education services (SES) program

- Maintain dedicated funding stream in Title I for afterschool tutoring programs.
- Require the coordination of SES programs with other after school programs and the regular school day to increase impact on achievement and improve cost effectiveness.
- Broaden the definition of SES beyond tutoring to include academic enrichment activities and make SES funds more accessible to comprehensive afterschool programs.
- Create simplified means for after school providers to become SES providers.

- Direct states to increase emphasis on a comprehensive service delivery model that encourages existing school-based, community-based, faith-based and other public agency afterschool programs to become SES providers; prioritize outreach, technical assistance, and encourage partnerships.
- Eliminate barriers to using SES to fund summer learning programs.

We strongly urge you to give these ESEA recommendations your highest consideration to make a dramatic impact on student success and program effectiveness. We would welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to ensure that a reauthorized ESEA accomplishes our shared goals. Please contact Jennifer Peck at Jennifer@partnerforchildren.org or call 510-830-4200 x1601, if you would like further information or to set up a meeting to continue the conversation.