



For Immediate Release

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Extensive Bipartisan Advocacy Forces Administration to Release Afterschool and Summer Funding

CHICAGO, IL. — Susan Stanton, Executive Director of ACT Now, issued the following statement in response to the [Trump Administration's decision to release current FY25 funding for afterschool and summer learning](#) that it had previously chosen to withhold:

“After seventeen days of immense bipartisan advocacy, the administration had no other choice but to release the funding for the [21st Century Community Learning Centers \(21st CCLC\) grant](#). Advocates from all around the country made their voices heard that afterschool and summer programming are an essential service and must remain a federal priority moving forward.”

[State education agencies \(SEAs\) have historically received federal funding on July 1st](#), and when these funds did not flow, programs were caught off guard – unable to hire staff, plan for the upcoming school year, and provide engaging summer experiences to Illinois youth. This critical federal funding supports the facilitation of afterschool and summer learning programs for over 58,000 students in Illinois, across 544 communities, and provides responsive localized programming that allows working families to contribute to the local economy. The U.S. Department of Education has [communicated to SEAs that this funding will be released](#), but as of now, there is no confirmation that money has been received.

“We are grateful to our partner organizations within Illinois and across state lines who organized to compel the Trump Administration to release funding for 21st CCLC. We would also like to thank Congressional leaders who came together, regardless of political affiliation, and answered the call of advocates to fund afterschool and summer programming. In Illinois, especially, we saw tremendous leadership from Governor JB Pritzker, who led a group of 18 Governors pushing the White House to release this funding, and Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, who filed suit to release these funds.”

“While we are relieved that the funds are being released, the decision to withhold funds for such a long-standing, effective and evidence-based program was irresponsible, and short-sighted. We have seen service interruptions and delays in programming planning for the



next school year as a consequence of this delay. Further, 21st CCLC funds are a part of a larger withholding of education funding, and it is unclear at this time if all funds will be released. Any withholding of federal funding will have a disproportionate impact on school districts with the least number of resources and most need. In Illinois, we know that these schools are oftentimes in rural areas or are school districts that rely upon Title I funding from the federal government to support low-income students in closing achievement gaps. Any funding cuts will certainly have a ripple effect and end up harming all education-based programs.”

“We also continue to have fears about the longevity of programs like 21st CCLC and Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS), both of which the President has proposed to cut. As the FY26 budgeting process continues, advocates must continue to make it clear that these services are essential to the development of our children and the government’s bottom line cannot be at the expense of students’ learning.”

“What is evident from this situation is that parents, voters, lawmakers, educators and many more know the value of afterschool and summer programs regardless of their political party, geography, race, or ethnicity. We encourage all our lawmakers to lead with what is best for children and families moving forward and to invest in research-based strategies, like afterschool programming, that help our children grow into healthy and successful leaders for tomorrow.”

ACT Now will hold a [membership call](#) on Monday, July 21st at 12:00 p.m. to provide any breaking updates on this issue, implications for programs in Illinois, and information regarding next steps.

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[This statement](#) was issued by the Afterschool Alliance in response to the plans for releasing 21st CCLC funds. [This map](#) shows the network of 21st CCLC programs within Illinois congressional and state districts.

ACT Now is a statewide coalition supported by afterschool providers, families, business leaders, school districts, community advocates, youth organizations, and policymakers.