



An affinity group of the National Human Services Assembly

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

Background:

The hours between the sound of the school bell at 3:00 PM and the arrival of parents home from work can either be a time for trouble or an opportunity for development. Research shows that quality after-school programs improve student academic skills and graduation rates, make children and youth feel safer, and reduce the risk that they will engage in delinquent behavior.

- A study of 19 elementary schools in five states found that students participating in Foundations after-school programs increased their reading and math test scores nearly twice as much as comparable students who did not participate in the after-school program (Klein and Bolus, 2002).
- The National Research Council reports that it is less likely that students will be arrested, take drugs, engage in teen sex, smoke, or drink if they participate frequently in structured activities during nonschool hours (Eccles and Gootman, 2001).

Further, after-school programs are a cost-effective federal investment. Research demonstrates that investing in children and youth while they are young will reduce future costs to government and society as a whole:

- The Rose Institute finds that quality after-school programs can reduce costs related to welfare, crime, and education (remediation services and grade repetition) for an average net benefit of between \$79,484 and \$119,427 per participant (Brown et al., 2002).
- The Washington State Institute for Public Policy finds that effective after-school programs can yield a benefit-to-cost ratio to taxpayers and crime victims of \$1.87 to \$5.29 for every dollar spent (Aos, et al, 2001).

Program:

The purpose of 21st CCLC, reauthorized under Title IV, Part B, of the No Child Left Behind Act, is to provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low performing schools.

Under the reauthorized program, 21st CCLC activities focus on enhancing the academic skills of participants to help them meet local and state academic standards. Additionally, 21st CCLC programs offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, art, music, and recreation programs, technology education programs, and character education programs, that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.

Currently more than 1.2 million children are being served by 21st CCLC programs in approximately 6,800 rural and inner-city public schools in 1,420 communities throughout the country.

Funding: FY 2004 appropriation: \$999 million
 FY 2005 appropriation: \$991 million
 FY 2006 President's budget request: \$991 million
 FY 2006 authorized funding level: \$2.25 billion

National Collaboration For Youth Funding Request: \$1.25 billion

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