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“America After 3PM” Report Shows New York Falling Behind on Afterschool

*Highlighting the Need Identified by Governor Andrew Cuomo in His 2014-15 Afterschool Budget Proposal, New York State is No Longer in the Top Ten States Nationwide
Chancellor Zimpher, President Collins, Police Chief Fowler, and Superintendent Suttmeier Say Quality Afterschool is Essential to Student Success*

Today's release of *America After 3PM* reveals that New York State has stalled in meeting the demand for afterschool programs over the last five years. 1.1million of New York's children and families are still without afterschool opportunities—the same number as in 2009. The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) is calling for substantially increased investments in afterschool programs so that these opportunities are available to students across New York.

When the survey was last conducted by the Afterschool Alliance in 2009, New York ranked third in the nation as an afterschool leader, based on a combined quality, participation, and parental satisfaction score. In 2014, however, New York is not even in the Top Ten.

New York State's drop in the *America After 3PM* rankings coincides with significant cuts to state funding in the recession, with funding 35% lower now than it was in 2009. Governor Andrew Cuomo proposed a major new investment of at least \$160 million annually in last year's Executive Budget to address New Yorkers' need for more afterschool programs statewide; unfortunately, however, no new statewide funds were added in the final state budget for 2014-15.

Moreover, *America After 3PM* highlights a growing gap in the availability of afterschool programs between New York City and the rest of the state. This year's survey found that 21% of New York students are enrolled in afterschool programs, a number unchanged from 2009. If New York City's higher than average participation rates are removed, only 15% of students participate in afterschool. This gap has undoubtedly been increased by New York City's investment of \$338 million in afterschool and summer programs this year, including the launch of 271 new middle school afterschool programs this fall. These programs started after the *America After 3PM* data was collected and are not reflected in the report.

“Quality afterschool programs contribute to increased school attendance and engagement among students of all ages while providing access to adult mentors and extending the amount of time students spend learning each day,” said Nancy L. Zimpher, chancellor of The State University of New York. “These programs are critical to the success of students throughout the education pipeline, from cradle to career.”

Afterschool programs are also a tremendous relief to New York's working parents, who are

otherwise faced with the nation's highest average costs for afterschool care—leading to an estimated 584,000 children being unsupervised every day across the state.

“As we seek to reduce crime and incarceration rates, high-quality afterschool programs that keep youth connected to their school and community are an important strategy for changing life outcomes,” said Syracuse Police Chief Frank Fowler, who spoke on the national press call for the release of *America After 3PM* along with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “For the hours when school is out, we need to provide young people with a safe place to be, a place with strong mentors who can support their development into healthy, productive adults.”

“As a small city school district in upstate New York, the Hudson CSD has had the good fortune of a strong and growing after school program since 2000 that serves over 400 students each school year across grades K – 12,” said Maria Suttmeier, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson City School District. “The extension of the school day is an essential element in our quest to improve the academic outcomes of our diverse student population. The programs and activities available to our youngest students inspire them to actively seek a connection to their school life. Our high school students are able to recover and accrue credit after school toward their graduation requirements. It is partnerships like these that will help us make a difference in narrowing the achievement gap. Without them, the gap will only widen.”

"As we advance the innovation economy in the North Country, we need both public and private investment in our community development infrastructure that expands opportunities and capacity to prepare our future workforce. Afterschool programs with hands-on learning opportunities in the arts, sciences, mathematics and engineering stimulate curiosity and creativity beyond the traditional classroom and empower youth to try new things relevant to future career exploration," said Tony Collins, President of Clarkson University. "Afterschool programs offer a great gateway for collaborative community efforts with industry, higher education, and our K-12 professionals to prepare our students for cutting edge careers."

“Outside of New York City, New York has failed to advance in making afterschool opportunities available over the last five years. Now, New York has actually fallen behind nationally. This is a tremendous disservice to children and families across the state,” said Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Executive Director of NYSAN. “Five years ago, New York was seen as a national model for effective afterschool programs, and must again take leadership in this critical area.”

Research suggests that regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs over several years can help close the achievement gap between students coming from low and high-income communities. Afterschool programs have also been found to increase school engagement and school attendance, reduce risks of substance abuse and involvement in juvenile crime, and increase access to adult mentors. 85% of New York parents support public funding for afterschool programs.

About NYSAN

The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) is a public-private partnership dedicated to promoting young people's safety, learning, and healthy development by increasing the quality and availability of programs available outside the traditional classroom.

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