

From: Amy Shollenberger [amy@action-circles.com]
Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2016 5:58 PM
To: Pepper, James; Allen, Susan
CC: Morehouse, Holly
Subject: Follow up on Afterschool funding request
Attachments: SHAP 1.5.2015ds.docx

Hi, James and Sue,

Thanks for taking the time to chat with me the other day. Per your request, I asked for permission to share the memo the Afterschool folks had prepared for Shap in response to his questions. Dylan gave permission, with the caveat that you understand that this was simply questions asked and answered and nothing more. The memo is attached for your review. Please let me or Holly Morehouse (cc'd here) know if you have additional questions.

I also wanted to let you know that the Childhood Poverty Council delivered their report to the legislature this week. Putting state funding into the Expanded Learning Opportunities Special Fund is the first recommendation in the report, which you can find here:

<http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/WorkGroups/Senate%20Health%20and%20Welfare/Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council/W~Katie%20McLinn~Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council%20Annual%20Progress%20Report%202015~1-15-2016.pdf>

Katie McLinn also did a summary for the Senate Health and Welfare Committee, which is posted here:

<http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/WorkGroups/Senate%20Health%20and%20Welfare/Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council/W~Katie%20McLinn~Overview%20of%20the%20Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council%27s%202015%20Annual%20Progress%20Report~1-15-2016.pdf>

We are also expecting the Working Vermont Legislative Caucus to consider a proposal to write a letter of support for the ELO SF request to the House Appropriations Committee – the caucus meets on Wednesday at noon in Room 10.

Thanks again for your interest and consideration of the request for \$2.5 million in state funds in the ELO Special Fund for FY17.

amy

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TO: Speaker of the House Shap Smith

FROM: Vermont Afterschool, Inc.

DATE: January 5, 2016

RE: Investing in the Expanded Learning Opportunities Special Fund

CONTACT INFO: Holly Morehouse, hollymorehouse@vermontafterschool.org

Amy Shollenberger, amy@action-circles.com / 802-793-1114



Thank you again for your interest in afterschool, summer, and expanded learning opportunities (ELO) and for the opportunity to meet with you last week. We appreciate the legislature's support for these programs and applaud the establishment of the ELO Special Fund last spring. As we shared last week, we are asking that the legislature follow through on this commitment and allocate \$2.5 million in the ELO Special Fund for FY17 in order to increase access to afterschool, summer, and ELO programs for underserved populations and areas of the state.

Data Regarding Afterschool vs. Summer (and Hunger issues)

In response to your inquiry, we have not been able to locate any reports or data that show that investing in summer programs is more important than investing in afterschool programs, or vice versa. What we *have* seen is overwhelming data that shows that by investing in both strategies together, Vermont could close the academic achievement gap, keep kids healthy and safe, save money in the long run, and support working families. A couple of additional points:

- In addition to academic supports, afterschool and summer programs provide important resources, such as adult role models, opportunities to be active, and healthy snacks and meals.
- Afterschool and summer learning and food go hand in hand. Students are more likely to participate in afterschool and summer programming when meals and snacks are offered and students learn better when they are not hungry. Participation in out-of-school time meals reduces the risk for diabetes and obesity and improves student behavior, social interactions and academic performance.
- Providing nutritious meals and snacks to children can help eliminate the cycle of poverty. Proper nutrition leads to good health, proper brain development and good social skills. This inevitably leads to academic success and higher paying jobs.
- Many Vermont students who benefit from school breakfast and lunch during the school day rely on the afterschool snack program, the afterschool supper/meal program, and the summer food program. Current regulations allow afterschool programs to provide a healthy snack in the afternoon as well as a full meal later in the day. Summer programs can provide two healthy snacks and two full meals per day.

- Several years ago under Principal Ingrid Chrisco, Brattleboro Area Middle School made a concerted effort to reduce the academic achievement gap among their students. A range of strategies were implemented by the school, including both afterschool and summer programming. *Over several years with all the strategies taken together, the school was able to reduce the academic achievement gap by approximately 60 points.*

The recommendations by the ELO Working Group for the ELO Special Fund explicitly aim to keep the Fund specific in purpose but flexible in delivery. If implemented as recommended, the ELO Special Fund would allow communities to apply for funding for what they need most. For example, if a strong afterschool program is already in place, they could apply to add summer programming. We believe that a competitive grant process combined with local flexibility in implementation will help to ensure that the dollars get used in ways that are most needed.

Requiring Summer Learning

We are intrigued by your brainstorm idea to require all public schools in Vermont to offer summer programming. The National Summer Learning Association recommends that summer programs run full-day (8hours/day) for at least six weeks as research has shown that that is the dosage level needed in order to have a significant impact on the academic achievement gap. As you know, several challenges would arise in attempting to make such a requirement in Vermont (e.g., teacher contracts, overwhelmed schools, financial costs, etc.). However, there may be a way to take a strong, interim step forward along these lines.

Schools and communities in New Hampshire that receive grants through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program are required to offer at least six weeks of summer programming in order to receive their award. The 21st CCLC Program is a federal grant program that is administered via the state agencies of education and Vermont does not have such a requirement for our grantees around summer programming. Currently, only 66% of 21st CCLC-funded sites in Vermont offer programming for at least five weeks in summer. If the Vermont Agency of Education were to require all 21st CCLC programs in Vermont to offer six weeks of summer programming, that would impact summer programming at 100 schools/sites across Vermont. This step would allow the state to essentially pilot your idea at about a third of Vermont's schools while leveraging federal dollars. It would provide a chance to see how teachers respond, how many students participate, expected outcomes, etc.

Adding this requirement to current 21st CCLC grantees would not be possible without also increasing the size of their grant awards. Because 21st CCLC grants are awarded for five years in Vermont, it would be difficult to change this requirement without allocating additional funds. However, if there were money in the ELO Special Fund, grants could be awarded to communities to essentially supplement their 21st CCLC grant and bring their level of summer programming up to the desired six week session.

Due to limitations in available data we cannot know exactly how much it would cost to expand summer programming at all Vermont 21st CCLC sites to the 6-week recommended levels, however, we can make the following estimates:

- Several years ago Vermont Afterschool conducted an analysis of summer programming costs in Vermont. Based on available 21st CCLC data, we were able to estimate that a 6-week summer program for about 70 students costs approximately \$60,000/year in Vermont. The total cost for this level of programming at all 100 current 21st CCLC sites in Vermont would thus be \$6 million/year, if all sites were to increase programming to the full six weeks.
- For comparison, we also used data from an online cost calculator for out-of-school time programs provided by the Wallace Foundation. Our calculations based on their model show an average per pupil cost of \$1200 for six weeks. For 70 students in a program, the site cost would be \$84,000/site or \$8.4 million total for all 100 21st CCLC sites in the state. Using both approaches together, one could estimate that the total cost for summer programming at this level would cost between \$6 million - \$8.4 million per year; however, some of that cost is already covered by current spending in Vermont.
- VTAOE has reported that they estimate that schools in Vermont spend approximately \$12 million in federal and other funding, including 21st CCLC grants, on afterschool and summer programming.¹ While we do not know the specific breakdown of this funding between afterschool and summer, we believe that it would be reasonable to assume that about 1/3 of the money is going to summer programming and the rest to afterschool programming.²
- *Using the calculations in the bullet points above, we estimate that approximately \$3.96 million is currently being spent in Vermont on summer programming leaving an additional \$2.04 million*

¹ The \$12 million figure quoted here includes non-21st CCLC sites; however, in other conversations, VTAOE has reported that the \$5.7 million per year in federal 21st CCLC funding is being matched by another \$6 million in other funding.

² If a site is offering afterschool programming through the school year the total hours offered would be about 370 (10 hrs/week * 37 weeks or 59% of the total programming hours for the year). The recommended level of summer programming is 240 hours (6 weeks * 40 hrs/week or 41% of the total programming hours for the year). However, we know from the Vermont 21st CCLC data that few of the current 21st CCLC sites offer the full six weeks of programming hence the lower estimate of 33% of funding towards summer as a conservative estimate.

needed to bring all current 21st CCLC sites in Vermont up to the recommended level of 6-weeks of summer programming (assuming an average of 70 students participating at each site).

- Please note that these are rough estimates that could be further clarified if you have additional questions or would like for us to pursue this further.

Thank you again for your time and interest in this matter. We continue to support the allocation of \$2.5 million for the ELO Special Fund and hope to keep an open dialogue with you on any ideas or strategies that would increase access to afterschool and summer program for the children and youth in Vermont.