

Illinois Afterschool Youth Development Program Act

SB 3543 Sponsors | Senators Toi W. Hutchinson – Iris Y. Martinez – John J. Millner – Kimberly A. Lightford – Deanna Demuzio

HB 1826 Sponsors | Representatives William Davis – Jehan A. Gordon – Linda Chapa LaVia – Deborah L. Graham – Elizabeth Hernandez

ACT NOW TO INVEST IN THE SUCCESS OF ILLINOIS' YOUTH

Quality afterschool programs help youth succeed by developing critical academic, career, and life skills. Youth with high levels of participation in such programs have lower drop-out rates and higher graduation rates and miss fewer days of school. Afterschool activities help keep youth and communities safe by reducing risky behavior including crime and violence, drug and alcohol abuse and sexual activity.

Despite these proven results, most youth lack access to quality afterschool programs. Approximately half of all K – 12 children are either responsible for themselves or are left in a sibling's care after school hours.

What the Afterschool Youth Development Program Act Does

The Afterschool Youth Development Program Act creates a framework for coordinating and strengthening afterschool services in Illinois. The Act is subject to appropriations, however private funding can be used to implement the Act. By creating the Illinois Youth Development Council (housed in the Executive Branch), the act establishes mechanisms to create accountability for afterschool programs. The Council will:

- Develop standard, measurable indicators of program quality and successful outcomes
- Collect and rigorously analyze the data on the effectiveness of state and locally supported afterschool programs
- Eliminate waste

- Increase program participation and quality by providing technical assistance, capacity building, and program evaluation and monitoring
- Identify and address gaps in service while minimizing waste
- Make public recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor concerning system-wide goals, alignment of youth development services, and resource alignment.
- Include public and private sector representation, including four members of the General Assembly, senior administrators of key state agencies and community stakeholders.

The act creates a three-year Afterschool Demonstration Program that will be administered by the Department of Human Services to evaluate the impact, outcomes and cost of quality afterschool programs, while simultaneously strengthening participating programs.

- Participants would include eligible entities providing afterschool programs with the capacity to provide quality services, collaborate with community stakeholders and show cost-effectiveness. Existing programs with experience in providing afterschool services in Illinois would be given priority for participation in the Demonstration Program, although new entities will also be eligible.
- Outcomes of the Demonstration Program—as determined by an independent evaluator—will be reported to the General Assembly and the Governor and heard before legislative committees. A positive evaluation would put the state on a path to developing a plan for improving access to afterschool programs.

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