

AN ACT concerning children.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Afterschool Youth Development Project Act.

Section 5. Purpose and findings. The General Assembly declares that it is the policy of this State to provide all young people between the ages of 6 and 19 with access to quality afterschool programs through a State commitment to sufficient and sustainable funding for programs that promote positive youth development. The need for this policy is based on a series of facts:

The General Assembly finds that youth who are engaged in quality afterschool activities are more likely to succeed in academics, employment, and civic affairs than youth who do not participate in afterschool activities. Youth with high levels of participation in quality afterschool programs miss fewer days of school, have lower drop-out rates, and higher rates of graduation.

The General Assembly also finds that youth in Illinois face greater barriers to success than ever before:

- (1) Statewide demand for quality afterschool activities far outpaces the current supply, with shortfall

estimates between 60 and 70 percent.

(2) Illinois youth spend fewer hours in school than in most other states and approximately 45% of all children in grades K-12 are either responsible for themselves or are in the care of a sibling during afterschool hours.

(3) On school days, the hours between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and sex.

The General Assembly also finds that the State of Illinois, having demonstrated national leadership in advancing toward universal early childhood education, must also expand youth development programming in order to realize the full, continued benefits of public investment in Illinois' young people.

The policy established by this Act will be developed through an afterschool demonstration program the results of which will be used to establish standards and policies to design and fund a statewide system of quality afterschool programs accessible to all youth between the ages of 6 and 19 that promote positive outcomes in such areas as education, employment, and civic success.

Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

"Afterschool program" means positive youth development activities provided to youth between the ages of 6 and 19 during the hours before or after school, during summer recess from school, or during the weekends. These activities may

include, but are not limited to, the following activity areas: academic support; arts, music, sports, cultural enrichment, and other recreation; health promotion and diseases prevention; life skills and work and career development; and youth leadership development. For the purposes of this Act, "afterschool program" also means a program funded under the Afterschool Demonstration Program.

"Demonstration" or "Demonstration Program" means the Afterschool Demonstration Program as established under this Act.

"Council" means the Illinois Youth Development Council.

"Community advisory group" means a group of key local stakeholders convened to help ensure effective program delivery through increased collaboration. This group is required as a condition of participating in the demonstration period.

Section 15. Illinois Youth Development Council.

(a) Creation. In order to effectively achieve the policy established in this Act, the Illinois Youth Development Council shall be created. The purpose of the Council is to provide oversight and coordination to the State's public funds currently invested to support positive youth development programs and activities and to set systemwide policies and priorities to accomplish the following 5 major objectives: (i) set afterschool program expansion priorities, such as

addressing gaps in programming for specific ages and populations; (ii) create outcome measures and require all afterschool programs to be evaluated to ensure that outcomes are being met; (iii) oversee the establishment of a statewide program improvement system that provides technical assistance and capacity building to increase program participation and quality systemwide; (iv) monitor and assess afterschool program quality through outcome measures; and (v) establish State policy to support the attainment of outcomes. The Council shall be created within the Department of Human Services.

(b) Governance. The Illinois Youth Development Council shall reflect the regional, racial, socioeconomic, and cultural diversity of the State to ensure representation of the needs of all Illinois youth. The Council shall be composed of no less than 28 and no more than 32 members. The Council may establish a defined length of term for membership on the Council.

(1) Membership. The Council shall include representation from both public and private organizations comprised of the following:

(A) Four members of the General Assembly: one appointed by the President of the Senate, one appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(B) The chief administrators of the following State agencies: the Department of Human Services; the Illinois State Board of Education; the Department of Children and Family Services; the Department of Public Health; the Department of Juvenile Justice; the Department of Healthcare and Family Services; the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; the Illinois Board of Higher Education; and the Illinois Community College Board.

(C) The Chair of the Illinois Workforce Investment Board and the Executive Director of the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority.

The following Council members shall be appointed by the Governor:

(D) Two officials from a unit of local government.

(E) At least 3 representatives of direct youth service providers and faith-based providers.

(F) Three young people who are between the ages of 16 and 21 and who are members of the Youth Advisory Group as established in paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(G) Two parents of children between the ages of 6 and 19.

(H) One academic researcher in the field of youth development.

(I) Additional public members that include local

government stakeholders and nongovernmental stakeholders with an interest in youth development and afterschool programs, including representation from the following private sector fields and constituencies: child and youth advocacy; children and youth with special needs; child and adolescent health; business; and law enforcement.

Persons may be nominated by organizations representing the fields outlined in this Section. The Governor shall designate one of the Council members who is a nongovernment stakeholder to serve as co-chairperson. The Council shall create a subcommittee of additional direct youth service providers as well as other subcommittees as deemed necessary.

(2) Youth Advisory Group. To ensure that the Council is responsive to the needs and priorities of Illinois' young people, the Council shall establish an independent Youth Advisory Group, which shall be composed of a diverse body of 15 youths between the ages of 14 and 19 from across the State. Members that surpass the age of 19 while serving on the Youth Advisory Group may complete the term of the appointment. The Youth Advisory Group shall be charged with: (i) presenting recommendations to the Council 4 times per year on issues related to afterschool and youth development programming and policy; and (ii) reviewing key programmatic, funding, and policy decisions made by the

Council. To develop priorities and recommendations, the Youth Advisory Group may engage students from across the State via focus groups, on-line surveys, and other means. The Youth Advisory Group shall be administered by the Department of Human Services and facilitated by an independent, established youth organization with expertise in youth civic engagement. This youth civic engagement organization shall administer the application requirements and process and shall nominate 30 youth. The Department of Human Services shall select 15 of the nominees for the Youth Advisory Group, 3 of whom shall serve on the Council.

(c) Activities. The major objectives of the Council shall be accomplished through the following activities:

(1) Publishing an annual plan that sets system goals for Illinois' afterschool funding that include key indicators, performance standards, and outcome measures and that outlines funding evaluation and reporting requirements.

(2) Developing and maintaining a system and processes to collect and report consistent program and outcome data on all afterschool programs funded by State and local government.

(3) Developing linkages between afterschool data systems and other statewide youth program outcome data systems (e.g. schools, post-secondary education, juvenile justice, etc.).

(4) Developing procedures for implementing an evaluation of the statewide system of program providers, including programs established by this Act.

(5) Reviewing evaluation results and data reports to inform future investments and allocations and to shape State policy.

(6) Developing technical assistance and capacity-building infrastructure and ensuring appropriate workforce development strategies across agencies for those who will be working in afterschool programs.

(7) Reviewing and making public recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly with respect to the budgets for State youth services to ensure the adequacy of those budgets and alignment to system goals outlined in the plan described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(8) Developing and overseeing execution of a research agenda to inform future program planning.

(9) Providing strategic advice to other State agencies, the Illinois General Assembly, and Illinois' Constitutional Officers on afterschool-related activities statewide.

(10) Approving awards of grants to demonstration projects as outlined in Section 20 of this Act.

(d) Accountability. The Council shall annually report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the Council's progress towards its goals and objectives. The Department of Human

Services shall provide resources to the Council, including administrative services and data collection and shall be responsible for conducting procurement processes required by the Act. The Department may contract with vendors to provide all or a portion of any necessary resources.

Section 20. Afterschool Demonstration Program.

(a) Program. The Department of Human Services, in coordination with the Council, shall establish and administer a 3-year statewide, quality Afterschool Demonstration Program with an evaluation and outcome-based expansion model. The ultimate goal of the Demonstration shall be to develop and evaluate the costs, impact, and quality outcomes of afterschool programs in order to establish an effective expansion toward universal access.

(b) Eligible activity areas. Afterschool programs created under the Demonstration Program shall serve youths in Illinois by promoting one or more of the following:

(1) Academic support activities, including but not limited to remediation, tutoring, homework assistance, advocacy with teachers, college preparatory guidance, college tours, application assistance, and college counseling.

(2) Arts, music, sports, recreation, and cultural enrichment, including structured, ongoing activities such as theatre groups, development of exhibits, graphic

design, cultural activities, and sports and athletic teams.

(3) Health promotion and disease prevention, including activities and tools for increasing knowledge and practice of healthy behavior, drug, alcohol, tobacco and pregnancy prevention, conflict resolution, and violence prevention.

(4) Life skills and work and career development activities that prepare youth for a successful transition to the workplace, including career awareness, job fairs, career exploration, job shadowing, work readiness skills, interview skills, resume building and work experience, and paid internships and summer jobs.

(5) Youth leadership development activities aimed at increasing youths' communication skills and ability to help a group make decisions, to facilitate or lead a group discussion, and to initiate and direct projects involving other people including civic engagement, service learning, and other activities that promote youth leadership.

(c) Eligible entities. Currently funded or new entities, including but not limited to the following, shall be eligible to apply for funding:

- (1) Schools or school districts.
- (2) Community-based organizations.
- (3) Faith-based organizations.
- (4) Park districts.
- (5) Libraries.

(6) Cultural institutions.

Priority for participation in the Demonstration Program shall be given to entities with experience in providing afterschool programs in Illinois.

(d) Program criteria. New or existing applicants shall demonstrate the capacity to achieve the goals of this Act and meet the deadlines set forth by the Council through:

(1) The promotion of the development of those items outlined in subsection (b) of this Section.

(2) Evidence of community need and collaboration to avoid duplicating or supplanting existing services, which shall be shown through the creation of or reliance on an appropriate, existing community advisory group composed of a diverse makeup of members that may include, but is not limited to, educators, afterschool providers, local government officials, local business owners, parents, and youth.

(3) Cost-effective methods that will maximize the impact of the total dollar amount of the award.

(e) Expansion. Three years from the award of the first dollars, initial findings of an outcome evaluation of the Demonstration, conducted by an independent evaluator as described in subsection (d) of Section 25 of this Act, shall be reported to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Council, and the Youth Advisory Group with a hearing scheduled before the appropriate committees of the House and Senate for the

purpose of establishing an effective expansion toward universal access. A positive outcome evaluation, whereby performance outcomes determined by the Council are met, shall trigger a phased-in expansion toward full implementation.

Section 25. Effectiveness of afterschool programs.

(a) Program standards. Research has shown that high-performing youth programs demonstrate shared features of program quality. The Council shall establish a universal framework of youth development program standards that commonly define measurable indicators of program quality across the diverse array of eligible demonstration program activities.

(b) Evaluation and monitoring. Afterschool programs shall be held accountable to universal program quality standards as adopted by the Council. Data informing performance against these standards shall be monitored and collected by the Department of Human Services. Each afterschool program, in coordination with the corresponding community advisory group, shall also assess needs and gaps relative to addressing outcome goals.

(c) Capacity-building supports. A statewide program quality improvement system shall be established by the Council utilizing a qualified third party to provide assessment, coaching, technical assistance, and system and professional development. Provided supports shall first target those afterschool programs created under the Demonstration with the

ultimate goal of expansion to support the larger statewide system of youth development program providers.

(d) Demonstration outcome evaluation. An evaluation of the Demonstration shall be conducted by a third-party evaluator or evaluators selected through a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine how well the Demonstration Program meets the cost, impact, and quality outcome goals established by the Council. Initial findings shall be reported to the Council, the Governor, and the General Assembly within 3 years from the award of the first dollars and shall be the primary determining evidence to trigger expansion as described in subsection (e) of Section 20 of this Act.

Section 30. Funding. The creation and establishment of the Council, the Youth Advisory Group, and the Afterschool Demonstration Program shall be subject to appropriations, however the Department of Human Services shall be permitted to accept private funding or private resources at any time to implement this Act.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.