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Support for Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs AOE Proposal – April 17, 2018

Background and Purpose:

National studies indicate that students from economically disadvantaged families regress academically and socially -- compared to their more affluent peers -- when they do not have access to the same types of learning experiences outside of school hours and especially during the summer (often referred to as summer loss). Afterschool and summer learning programs mean programs designed to serve children and youth on a regular basis, including before and after school, and during the summer, by providing opportunities for personal, emotional, and academic growth. Increasing these enriching opportunities for children and youth in Vermont is a shared goal in improving student outcomes.

Proposal:

- State funds will be **allocated based on the 21st Century Community Learning Center's program requirements** pursuant to the provisions of Title IV, Part B of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (20 U.S.C. 7171-7176), and as may be further amended over time.
- Funds will support applicants based on the funding recommendations of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers **rigorous peer review process**.
- To the degree practicable, funds will be prioritized to support multi-year investments.
- Pursuant to the allowable uses section 4202 (c), not more than 2% may be used for state administration and not more than 3% used for state activities to support grantees.
- At the discretion of the Agency of Education, **state funds awarded to a grantee may be for less than \$50,000 annually**.
- The Agency of Education shall provide data on the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program upon request of the Vermont Legislature **using existing collection methods**, subject to change over time.

Funding:

The AOE requests that the Legislature authorize the AOE's use of any funds appropriated or raised and held in the Vermont Expanded Learning Opportunities Special Fund (\$2913) for distribution to the field based on peer-reviewed process detailed above. As an illustration of what could be accomplished, based upon a review of high quality unfunded proposals received during the current FY18 competition, the following could occur with the appropriation or fund-raising of \$225,000 per year:

- Six high needs sites could receive initial or expansion funding
- An additional 100 regular attendees in new and existing high needs rural sites could be served
- An additional 200 attendees could be served in new and existing high need rural sites

The development of **high-quality programs** require **predictable funding**.

- A one-time or one-year investment is not sufficient to support comprehensive programs for their intended purpose, particularly if the goal is to produce the often-cited student outcomes identified.
- Additionally, a one-year investment would not allow for the state to invest in new programs responsibly, as it would run the risk of a new program shutting down once the funding goes away – an outcome that we know is deleterious for both students and communities.