



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
VERMONT ALLIANCE

January 29, 2024

To: The Senate Committee on Appropriations

Dear Senators Kitchel, Perchlik, Westman, Starr, Sears, Baruth, and Lyons,

On behalf of the Vermont Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs and the more than 1,750 youth our Clubs serve annually in Brattleboro, Burlington, Rutland and Vergennes, we fully supported the passage of Act 78 in 2023, a grant program to expand summer and afterschool programs throughout Vermont.

Due to a legal issue with the language in Act 78, the Agency of Education is unable to grant to entities outside of local education agencies (LEA). Without a technical fix – the creation of a Special Afterschool Fund - this funding will be withheld from its original intent to provide increased access in underserved areas of the state through a mixed delivery model. Boys & Girls Clubs in Vermont encourage the Senate Appropriations Committee to follow through on creating a Special Fund in the Budget Adjustment Bill to allow grants to be distributed to public, nonprofit and community providers which would provide greater access for youth to participate in afterschool and summer programs across the state.

The Budget Adjustment Act Special Fund is important because nonprofit and community providers are an essential part of the out-of-school time ecosystem. Afterschool and summer learning programs, such as Boys & Girls Clubs, are essential supports that enable students to reach their full potential and complement the work of schools by reinforcing academic skills, providing enriching experiences and embedding students in a safe and healthy environment during the hours that school is out. According to Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Outcomes Report, 84% of Boys & Girls Club members reported earning grades of primarily A's & B's in school last year, with 93% of members expecting to graduate high school. Allowing nonprofit and community-based organizations access to the Special Fund and investing in existing afterschool and summer programs can provide cost savings because infrastructure, programs, and methodologies are already being implemented in other locations and are easily transferrable to new communities.

Boys & Girls Clubs across Vermont provide a safe, affordable place for children and teens during the critical out-of-school time and summer. By creating a Special Fund to administer the grant funds, it would increase access for youth to participate in afterschool and summer programs across the state.

Sincerely,

J.R. Kenny  
Lead Director, Government Relations  
Vermont Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs