OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN **NEWS**

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Governor Quinn Signs Legislation to Increase Access to Afterschool Programs

Law Creates Afterschool Youth Development Act, Illinois Youth Development Council

CHICAGO - July 27, 2010. Governor Pat Quinn today signed a bill into law that will help young people in Illinois participate in quality afterschool programs. The law creates the Afterschool Youth Development Act and the Illinois Youth Development Council to provide young people with access to afterschool activities.

"Good afterschool programs help our students succeed even after the school day ends," said Governor Quinn. "When students are involved in afterschool activities, they spend their free time learning and being productive, rather than roaming the streets and possibly getting into trouble."

Senate Bill 3543 sponsored by Sen. Toi Hutchinson (D-Olympia Fields) and Rep. Jehan Gordon (D-Peoria) creates the Afterschool Youth Development Act to start the Illinois Youth Developmental Council and the Afterschool Demonstration Program. Under the Act, young people between the ages of six and 19 will have access to quality afterschool programs.

The Illinois Youth Development Council will be created within the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) to oversee the creation of programs that foster positive youth development. The council will set priorities for expanding afterschool programs to make sure they address program gaps for specific ages and populations. The council will also create outcome measures and evaluate all programs.

The council, to be made up of between 28 and 32 members, will establish an independent Youth Advisory Group of young people between the ages of 14 and 19. The group will review the council's decisions and make additional recommendations to the council.

Under the new law, DHS – in coordination with the council – must administer a three-year Afterschool Demonstration Program for young people between the ages six and 19. Through the demonstration program, DHS will develop and evaluate the costs, impact and quality of a variety of afterschool programs, including: the arts, music, sports, recreation and culture; academic programs; health promotion and disease prevention; life skills and career development activities; and youth leadership development programs.

The law goes into effect immediately and was an initiative of Afterschool for Children and Teens (ACT) Now!. It received widespread support from organizations including the Illinois State Board of Education, the City of Chicago, the Illinois Association of Boys and Girls Clubs, Voices for Illinois Children, After School Matters and many other child advocacy groups.

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