



December 14, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: FY 2022-23 Budget Priorities for Expanded Learning Opportunities**

Dear Governor Newsom:

We are incredibly grateful for your historic commitment to and investment in expanded learning and enrichment opportunities that all students deserve. Given the state's expected surplus in FY 2022-23, the California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA3) - a coalition of expanded learning (afterschool and summer) program providers and child advocacy organizations, working together to increase the quality of and access to expanded learning opportunities for students across California - recommends the following actions in 2022 to effectively implement, leverage, and sustain expanded learning opportunities throughout the state. Together, we can help students and families get the support they need immediately, to recover from the pandemic, and to reach their full potential.

**Hold expanded learning programs harmless for decreased ADA through 2022**

Although schools and expanded learning programs are open for in-person support, student attendance is still irregular due to ongoing challenges such as surges, quarantining, vaccination side effects, and family work situations. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have greatly benefited from your action to waive financial penalties for lowered attendance through 2021. However, LEAs and their expanded learning partners need that same relief, at least, until all students and staff are required to be vaccinated. Additionally, not all LEAs have extended this same privilege to community-based expanded learning providers contracted to fully or partially run their programs. When LEA contracts tie payment to attendance units during this challenging time, some community-based providers suffer significant losses in funding and thus reduce service to students and families. **Please extend the hold harmless provisions to LEAs and, by extension, ensure their subcontracted community partners are not penalized for a decline in attendance at this point.**

**Protect and increase current expanded learning rates for all publicly-funded programs to prevent reductions in student access and staff capacity**

Expanded learning providers are facing severe staffing shortages while the demand for quality expanded learning programs grows dramatically across the state. With fixed student-to-staff ratios, programs have no choice but to reduce the number of students served if they do not have enough staff. Providers already see that the daily rate increases for After School Education and Safety (ASES) and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs in the FY 2021-22 budget have helped to attract and retain staff but \$10.18 per student per day for at least 3 hours of learning and care is still not enough. Expanded learning programs cannot offer competitive wages to recruit and retain the staff needed to serve their current students let alone serve more students<sup>1</sup>. **At a minimum, please increase ASES and 21st CCLC rates to \$10.75 per student per day (as the Legislature advocated for last budget cycle) and provide a proportional COLA of 5.35% to ensure students and families can continue to receive the support they count on, approximately an additional \$84 million for ASES and \$113 million for 21st CCLC<sup>2</sup>.** We understand that there is more work to be done to map out the road to \$5 billion for the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) by 2025 and \$2,500 per unduplicated pupil per year. **At this point, at a minimum, please provide a proportional COLA of 5.35% to ELO-P grantees, approximately an additional \$94 million.** Improving wages for expanded learning staff can also create a larger pool of potential teachers that the state needs. These trained and caring adults already have experience and relationships with students and families.

**Provide equitable expanded learning opportunities for middle and high school students**

Since the new Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) prioritizes TK-6 grade students, middle and high school students continue to struggle to get access to the expanded learning opportunities they deserve as well. The push for publicly-funded afterschool programs through Proposition 49 started with a focus on middle school students, to ensure youth had a safe and engaging place to go between the hours of 3 and 6 PM. Middle and high school students, who have been negatively impacted by COVID more than elementary students in many areas such as mental health and grades, need safe and welcoming spaces, academic and social and emotional support, enrichment and skill-building opportunities, and caring adults to help them re-engage in school and bridge gaps in learning. Currently, only 25% of high schools in the state receive state or federal funding for afterschool programs and only 26% of ASES programs serve middle school students. The FY 2021-22 budget daily rate increase provided only an additional \$0.18 per student per day for 21st CCLC programs serving high school students. **Please supplement publicly-funded middle and high school expanded learning programs with an additional \$50 million to ensure middle and high school students can continue to be served despite rising cost and staffing pressures.** This change would also help serve more middle and high school students at current sites and in more communities across the state.

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<sup>1</sup> The national [Wallace Foundation Out-of-School Time Cost Calculator](#), updated in 2021, estimates that a school year program focused on academic and enrichment at and run by a school in the Central Valley for a minimum of 15 hours a week, 35 weeks a year, to 84 students, costs between \$14-32 per student per day. A similar program in San Diego, costs between \$17.50-40.95, with higher costs in the summer.

<sup>2</sup> California's FY 2021-22 only provided a daily rate increase for 21st CCLC for 1 year. This number includes a continuance of that increase for FY 22-23 plus a 5.35% COLA and an increased rate to \$10.75 per student per day.

### **Provide necessary resources to coordinate and leverage expanded learning with other initiatives, including universal pre-K, community schools, and school-age child care**

With your commitment to \$5 billion by 2025 for ELO-P and setting the goal of “[Afterschool for All](#),” California needs a master plan, taskforce, and/or advisory committee to plan for this historic undertaking and investment in expanded learning and to coordinate and leverage other key student and family support programs and funding streams. To make the best use of state resources and reach the goal you have set, California needs a table for critical discussions with providers, partners, and families. The state created the Advisory Committee on Before and After School Programs to help with Prop. 49 implementation; however, this committee is not currently structured to hold these discussions and make recommendations. California also needs to collect essential data on current unmet need, the workforce, and implementation challenges and opportunities that vary throughout the state. LEAs are overwhelmed with navigating the pandemic and several new initiatives; they need state-level conversations to understand the best ways to meet student and families needs, braid funding, leverage staff, and plan for sustainability. **Please provide leadership and funding to create a table for statewide coordination and planning and to collect data to effectively serve students.**

### **Build and retain the expanded learning and future teacher workforce**

With the statewide staffing shortage in expanded learning and education in general, there are several opportunities to attract and develop a diverse workforce via expanded learning.

- The state should **provide funding designated for temporary bonuses** for staff, including teachers, paraprofessionals, and community partners, to work on the front lines of expanded learning.
- The state allows LEAs to provide stipends to high school students to work in programs after school and in the summer. The state should **encourage LEAs to tap their diverse student population and support a career pathway in education, starting in expanded learning.**
- The state should support **shared recruitment and training efforts for expanded learning, early education, K-12 education, and child care.**
- We are grateful for the commitment to include expanded learning and early childhood education staff in the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program. Please support the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing’s efforts to tap the [expanded learning workforce](#)<sup>3</sup> and **ensure community-based expanded learning staff are eligible** for this and/or similar programs.
- Lastly, we understand that LEAs have different definitions for a paraprofessional which, especially during staffing shortages, limits the ability of potential staff to work in expanded learning and across multiple LEAs when needed. Please **standardize the definition of paraprofessionals for publicly-funded expanded learning programs.**

All of these efforts will help students and families get the support they need now, help provide a living wage and career path for the expanded learning workforce, and build a more diverse pipeline of teachers and education workers.

### **Address implementation challenges and leverage opportunities with ELO-P**

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<sup>3</sup> [Workforce research](#) finds that 70% of expanded learning staff are people of color, 90% are bilingual in English and Spanish, and 78% live in the communities they serve. The majority of these staff are pursuing careers in teaching, afterschool leadership, education administration, and school counseling.

To effectively serve students and their families with the new ELO-P, amendments to code and additional guidance are needed. As an example, while many LEAs are community-based providers that run ASES or 21st CCLC programs are accustomed to serving students 8+ hours a school day, fewer run programs through the summer or other intersessional periods, and very few run summer programs for 9 hours a day. Additionally, a 9-hour day of activities in the summer for a kindergartener should look different than the day of a sixth-grader. Code should provide flexibility to LEAs to tailor their programming based on student and community needs but more discussion, data collection, and decisions are needed to implement a high-quality program to provide full-day and full-year learning and care for different age and developmental groups. **Please work with the expanded learning field and CDE to ensure ELO-P implementation challenges are addressed in any clean-up language.**

We thank you for your consideration of these requests to effectively provide expanded learning opportunities that all students deserve today and for years to come. We look forward to discussing and refining these proposals with your office. Please contact Jen Dietrich at (510) 830-4200 x1615 or [jdietrich@partnerforchildren.org](mailto:jdietrich@partnerforchildren.org) for any questions.

Sincerely,

California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA3)