



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OREGON ALLIANCE

Senate Committee on Education
Testimony in Support of Afterschool Learning and Enrichment Grants

Dear Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Alliance of Boys & Girls Club, we are honored to have the opportunity to submit testimony in support of funding for afterschool programs. Statewide, Boys & Girls Clubs have 13 organizations with 47 Club and school-based sites, including 17 Teen Centers who enable young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. In 2024, Boys & Girls Clubs reached over 40,000 youth through afterschool and summer programs, team sports and community outreach events.

As long-time providers of afterschool across the state, Boys & Girls Clubs have witnessed firsthand the critical role that afterschool programs play in the lives of children, families, and our communities.

Funding for afterschool programs is a necessary investment for Oregon's youth and families. This legislation embraces the expertise and essential role that community partners provide by ensuring funding is accessible directly to community-based organizations (CBOs). We would welcome an opportunity to support continued work in finding the best mechanism to fund community-led programs while ensuring the highest quality of safe and enriching environments during the critical hours after school.

While Boys & Girls Clubs abide by strict national guidelines and standards to provide high-quality, high-impact programs, Clubs still face barriers—such as insurance—when meeting local and state requirements within the education system. Programs from the around state continue to share about the youth and family impact they see, as well as challenges faced with previous investment models. We need clear, strong language that would ensure the mechanism for administering funds is equitable without requiring duplicative compliance and safety measures or imposing standards that cause undue burden on those most deeply engaged with target communities.

As COSA shared, Oregon's demand for afterschool programs far exceeds availability, leaving too many children without the support they need to thrive. We are proud to be part of a coalition that can authentically speak to the power of expanded learning programs, demonstrating that community-led afterschool and summer programs are essential partners in youth success.

We support SB 896 to fund afterschool grants, and would appreciate ongoing opportunities to find sustainable funding solutions that can support expanded learning across Oregon. This bill can be the next step in helping ensure that every child, regardless of their socioeconomic background, has access to high-quality afterschool programs.

Investing in these grants is an investment in our youth, workforce, and the future of our state.

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Thank you for taking the time to consider this issue. We appreciate your leadership in supporting afterschool programs and welcome any questions to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Oregon Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs

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