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NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS CONGRESS FOR WORKING TOGETHER TO APPROVE \$121.9 BILLION FOR K-12 ECONOMIC SUPPORT WITH SET ASIDES FOR SUMMER LEARNING AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

NSLA Commends U.S. Senators Chris Murphy (CT) and Michael Bennet (CO) for Championing the Summer and Afterschool Set Asides in the American Rescue Plan

WASHINGTON, DC (March 12, 2021) – Today the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) celebrates a monumental win for America’s children and families, summer learning programs and community partners across the nation, as the House and Senate have approved \$121.9 billion for K-12 economic support under the American Rescue Plan. The bill includes billions in funding via set-asides at the state and local levels for summer learning and out-of-school time programs that was championed by U.S. Senators Chris Murphy (CT) and Michael Bennet (CO).

“We applaud Senator Murphy and Senator Bennet for urging Congress to prioritize summer and out-of-school programs by providing much-needed funding under the American Rescue Plan,” said Aaron P. Dworkin, CEO, National Summer Learning Association. “We’re appreciative that Congress recognizes the importance of these programs, especially as we lean towards creating equitable opportunities for learning and development for all students as we transition them back to in-person instruction after a year of remote learning due to COVID-19.”

The news hit nearly a week after leaders from the NSLA and the Afterschool Alliance joined Senator Murphy and Senator Bennet for a National Virtual Briefing on Summer Enrichment Funding. The briefing underscored the great need to pass another COVID-19 relief bill, which dedicates summer enrichment funding to support America’s most vulnerable students, as well as direct aid for local educational agencies, community-based organizations, and municipalities providing quality summer enrichment programs and new programming.

Specifically, of the \$121.9 billion within Elementary and Secondary Education Emergency Relief Fund under the American Rescue Plan, there is a 5% set aside (\$6.01 billion) to support learning loss, a 1% set aside (\$1.22 billion) to support afterschool programming, and a 1% (\$1.22 billion) set aside to support summer learning programs. Additionally, at the local level, there is a 20% set aside (\$21.9 billion) to support learning recovery by implementing evidence-based interventions. This direct funding will help ensure that young people will receive additional time with caring adults to address the full range of their academic, social, and emotional needs – especially those children who have been most impacted by the pandemic.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated the nation’s inequities in our school systems and communities like never before, shining a light on the digital divide, food insecurities, childcare issues, health disparities especially as it relates to mental health, and learning loss,” said Dworkin. “Now, with essential funding and policy support, summer learning and out-of-school time programs can help close the learning gap and acclimate students for a safe return to school. It will also provide the resources for the critical social-emotional supports our students need to return to school in the fall with confidence.”

About the National Summer Learning Association

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement and opportunity gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA has experts and a network of partners who can identify high-quality local programs to meet the needs of any learner, provide information on summer program practice and policies, offer tips for families and share the national context of summer’s essential role in education. To learn more about NSLA, visit summerlearning.org.