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Good afternoon, Chairwoman Bishop, Chairwoman Rubley, and members of the House Children and Youth Committee. My name is Carmen Medina and I am the Division Chief for the Division of Community and Student Services. On behalf of Secretary Zahorchak, I thank you for the opportunity to discuss the importance of after school programs.

Pennsylvania's commitment to academic achievement is to have every child graduate from high school proficient in core content areas, and ready for higher education or the workforce. To accomplish this goal, young people, education and youth stakeholders, communities, and families must all work together to provide our children with an academic support system that assists to ensure further success in life. Coupled with a standards-based system and a resiliency/wellness approach as the foundation for all educational programs, extended learning opportunities will prepare children for college and career success.

Extended learning opportunities provide valuable learning environments and safe havens for children during out-of-school time. Most of the students that participate in extended opportunities are children at-risk of not finishing high school. These programs also offer opportunities for parents and communities to work together and make their neighborhood a better place.

In the 2008-09 school year, Pennsylvania is providing \$121 million specifically targeted to tutoring and other programs that offer more time for students to learn, including after-school programs. In addition, starting this school year the state has a new way of funding schools – for the first time ever – based on ensuring that every school district has adequate resources to meet the unique educational needs of its population as determined by the General Assembly's landmark Costing-Out Report.

The law sets a goal of meeting the state's \$2.6 billion share of the "adequacy gap" within six years, and one of the most important elements of Pennsylvania's new school funding system is that school districts are required to use their annual increases that exceed inflation directly on more services for students. The menu of proven academic strategies includes Increased Instructional Time, which can be after school tutoring, longer school days, and extended school years.

In addition to this exciting advance towards fully funding after-school programs and other academic interventions through adequate and equitable basic education

funding, Pennsylvania continues the fund the Accountability Block Grant. The Block Grant was the product of bipartisan cooperation in the 2003-04 school year, and it provides school districts with \$271 million to invest in proven programs. Tutoring is one of the most popular Accountability Block Grant initiatives, reaching over 160,000 students in 2008-09.

Let me also highlight two Department of Education initiatives:

### **Educational Assistance Program**

The Educational Assistance Program, commonly known as EAP, is a Governor's initiative signed into law for the 2003-04 school year. In the first year, the program provided increased instructional support to almost 35,000 students in 82 of the state's most academically challenged districts. In the second year, the program reached an additional 46,055 students. Given the increases seen in student performance on statewide reading and math exams, the program was expanded for the 2005-06 school year to reach 163 school districts and 12 Career and Technical Centers (CTCs) by providing increased instructional time to students. Increased instructional time consists primarily of tutoring before and after school as well as on the weekends. Eligible students – those scoring below grade level in reading or math – may receive tutoring before school, after school, on weekends or during the summer. Most EAP districts choose to put most of their EAP funds into this before and after school tutoring. Approximately 172,000 students are tutored each year.

Most importantly, we are seeing improvement in students' academic performance and behavior as a result of this program. For instance, a teacher in Penn Cambria school district writes: "I thought that I would share with you one success that I observed during tutoring. One of our students I had observed previously when I substitute tutored in Gallitzin for a couple of nights. He was out of control. Now he is in our tutoring program. He attends every night, behaves, and seems to know that he has a safe place in which to be. I suspect home is not too good. Recently he spends time just enjoying reading, sitting in the chairs by the magazines."

And in Upper Darby SD, a parent was so impressed with their Summer EAP Program, she sent the following:

"She definitely benefited from the small class size. Her confidence has improved 99%. She is spitting math facts without any hesitation. She took an hour to read a book because each page she read, she would make predictions based on the pictures and her predictions are right on. Thank you for this opportunity. This was the best thing we've ever done for our daughter."

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC)

Under the federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant, Pennsylvania currently receives \$42.2 million, which supports 157 grantees, 400 sites, and over 37,000 school age children.

21st Century Community Learning Centers focus on providing expanded educational opportunities to school age children attending low performing schools. From 1998 to 2001, the United States Department of Education administered the 21st CCLC program and supplied funds to local communities through a competitive proposal process. In 2002, administration of the 21st CCLC program was turned over to the states.

Pennsylvania's primary goal for its 21st CCLC is to assist children meet state standards in core academic subjects by providing students with academic enrichment opportunities. These centers offer participants a broad array of services and programs, such as art, music, recreation activities, character education, career and technical training, drug and violence prevention programming and technology education in addition to traditional tutoring services. These opportunities may take place before school, after school and/or during holidays or summer recess. Educational services for families of participating students, such as literacy instruction, computer training and/or cultural enrichment are also provided.

I am happy to report that we are seeing promising results from children participating in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs. For instance, 48% of regular attendees increased by half a grade or more in the Reading/Language Arts, and 41% of attendees increased by half a grade or more in Math. Students who attended a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC after school program for 90 days or more showed the most improvement. Turning in work, completing homework to teachers' satisfaction, participating in class, and academic performance were the highest rated positive changes in behavior reported by teachers among after school students.

Beyond EAP and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, the Department has other resources that include federal Title I, partnership with DPW for teen parent needs and prevention, and special populations that have extended learning opportunities embedded in their programs. For example, the Migrant Education Program provides supplemental education via extended learning opportunities to the children of migratory farm workers that require special educational services due to their mobile lifestyles. As a result of our efforts, currently 98% of the PA migrant students graduate from high school and 87% of them move on into college.

Thank you and I look forward to answering your questions.

27%  
cut  
Cameron  
11 million reduction  
from PA