

# NEWS



S E N A T O R  
**CONNIE M. LEYVA**

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## **Leyva Bill Would Save California's After School Programs**

### ***SB 78 Would Keep 67,000 Children in After School Programs***

SACRAMENTO – Earlier today, Senator Connie M. Leyva (D-Chino) introduced important legislation to increase funding for California's statewide after school program, which has not received an augmentation for over a decade.

Sponsored by the California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance and supported by over a dozen organizations, SB 78 seeks to increase funding for the After School Education and Safety (ASES) program—the main after school funding mechanism in California. SB 78 would continuously appropriate an additional \$99,305,000 to the California Department of Education for the ASES program, bringing total annual funding to \$649,305,000. Beginning in the 2018-19 fiscal year, and each fiscal year after that, funding would increase simultaneously with minimum wage increases to ensure that programs remain solvent.

“SB 78 will prioritize the needs of California's future generations by making sure that these important after school programs do not close their doors on thousands of students who rely on these services to get ahead in school, stay out of trouble and avoid dangerous environments,” Senator Leyva said. “While I appreciate recent reports that leaner economic times may lie ahead, it is critical that we stand strong to support cost effective programs that serve our communities and working families. When 67,000 students could potentially lose access to after school programs, I firmly believe that it is vital for state leaders to back efforts to reinforce these successful programs.”

Research shows that after school programs provide a variety of benefits to students including: improved school attendance, English fluency, academic success, crime prevention, and social-emotional skill development. These programs are cost effective and provide a return of \$2 to \$9 dollars for every \$1 invested.

The San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office has voiced strong support for increasing after school funding in order to improve the lives of young people in California.

"After school programs are essential to public safety, because they keep kids supervised and off the streets in the short term and on track to graduate from high school in the long run," said San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael A. Ramos. "On behalf of 400 law enforcement and crime survivor members of *Fight Crime: Invest in Kids / California*, I applaud Senator Leyva's commitment to sustaining high-quality after school programs and proudly support SB 78."

With over 50 program sites in the 20<sup>th</sup> State Senate District, THINK Together provides important after school services to students across the district.

“After school program providers are struggling to maintain compliance with code regulations and quality standards under the current funding structure. There is a real threat that a significant portion of California’s 10-year, \$5 billion dollar investment in after school programs could collapse,” noted THINK Together Director of Policy and Partnerships Steven Amick.

Approved by voters in 2002, Proposition 49 established the ASES program and provided ongoing funding of \$550 million per year for before and after school programs. Funding for ASES programs has not increased in over ten years, while minimum wage increases and state mandated paid sick leave have raised operating costs. Meanwhile, the Average Daily Attendance rate for ASES of \$7.50 per child has not increased since 2006. In order to adjust to these cost pressures, after school programs have reduced their hours and cut academic activities.

As SB 78 was introduced today, the Senate Rules Committee will soon assign the bill to the appropriate Senate policy committee(s) for consideration.