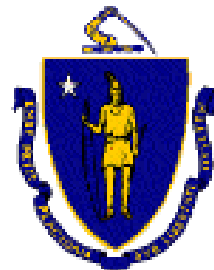


THE MASSACHUSETTS AFTER SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL TIME COMMISSION

Senator Thomas McGee and Representative Marie St. Fleur
Co-Chairs



ABOUT THE SPECIAL COMMISSION

The Purpose and Charge of the Special Commission

The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time was created by the Massachusetts Legislature to “study and recommend how to’ define and ‘better coordinate, expand, finance and improve accessible, affordable, and quality out-of-school time programming for school age children in all settings in Massachusetts.” The Special Commission will review, analyze and make recommendations to strengthen the Commonwealth’s afterschool system. Their findings will be published in a report that is expected in the fall of 2007.

Special Commission Leadership and Members

The Special Commission is co-chaired by Senator Thomas McGee, the Chair of the Senate Labor and Workforce Development Committee and by Representative Marie St. Fleur, the Vice-Chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means. The Commission has 36 members representing community and faith-based organizations, public and private schools, child care organizations, advocacy, and parent-teacher organizations. For a complete list of Commission members, visit our website at: www.massafterschoolcomm.org.

How the Special Commission Works

The Special Commission is convening three working groups that will develop recommendations in three key areas: 1) Information and Access; 2) Quality, Workforce and Professional Development; and 3) Sustainability. The Commission is also holding ten public hearings throughout the Commonwealth to receive testimony about the importance and value of afterschool programs. The public is also invited to post comments at our website (www.massafterschoolcomm.org) as well as our blog (www.massafterschoolcomm.blogspot.com) if it is not possible to attend a public hearing.

What the Commission Has Done So Far

The Special Commission has held six public hearings in Springfield, Pittsfield, Worcester, Quincy, Dartmouth and Framingham. Four public hearings will be held in September on the Cape, and in Lynn, Merrimack Valley and Boston. The Special Commission has also visited five diverse afterschool programs in the state with a focus on different age ranges and program models. All three of the Special Commission’s Work Groups are meeting regularly and are in the process of reviewing and analyzing data to help create recommendations in the areas of data, access, quality, workforce and professional development and sustainability.

What the Commission Has Learned to Date

Youth, parents, afterschool program providers, librarians, school officials and municipal leaders have all talked about the positive impact of afterschool programs upon children, youth, families and the communities in which they reside. At this preliminary stage, the Special Commission has learned there is a huge demand for quality afterschool programs across the state especially for older youth and for children and youth with special needs. Many communities do not have afterschool programs at all and transportation to existing programs is a challenge state-wide in urban, suburban and rural communities. More coordination among existing afterschool efforts has been requested as well as the exploration of ways to increase funding to meet the demand for safe and enriching learning opportunities after school. Additional work is being done to further analyze the public testimony that will help inform the recommendations for the Special Commission’s report.

For More Information

If you seek additional information about the Special Commission, contact Debra McLaughlin, Consultant to the Commission at dmclaughlin@kunnusta.com or at 617.792.3173.