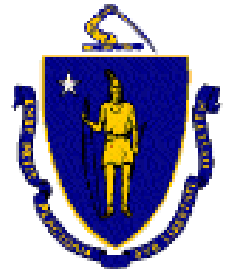


THE MASSACHUSETTS SPECIAL COMMISSION ON AFTER SCHOOL AND OUT OF TIME

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



For Release October 18, 2007

STATEMENT BY AFTER SCHOOL COMMISSION CO-CHAIRS SEN. THOMAS MCGEE AND REP. MARIE ST. FLEUR

REGARDING NATIONAL LIGHTS ON! AFTERSCHOOL CELEBRATION

"We salute the work of the Afterschool Alliance for their ongoing effort to promote quality afterschool programming for our nation's youth. Today's national celebration will bring thousands of communities across the country together to highlight the need to provide meaningful opportunities for over 14 million children. As Co-Chairs of the Special Commission on Afterschool and Out of School Time, we've participated in hearings across the Commonwealth that focus on what's working and what we need to improve upon here in Massachusetts. As the national Lights On! Afterschool Celebration points out, 'Afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire learning. They provide opportunities to help young people develop into successful adults.' We look forward to releasing an official report next month that will help to advance this important issue here in the Commonwealth."

About The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time

The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time has been created '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."

There are 1.1 million school aged children and youth ages 5-18 that live in Massachusetts. Of that group, 720,000 are children ages 5-13 and 380,000 are youth ages 14-19. Current state funding serves 205,500 children and youth leaving nearly 80% without access to quality and enriching afterschool and summer opportunities.

The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time has been studying this issue more in-depth. In addition to holding ten public hearings, it has also convened three working groups that will 1) analyze information and access issues; 2) identify quality, workforce and professional development concerns, and 3) determine how the afterschool system in the Commonwealth can be sustained. The Special Commission expects to issue a report in the fall of 2007 that will have recommendations in these areas which will strengthen the Commonwealth's afterschool system.

The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time

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