

AFTERSCHOOL ADVOCACY

Anyone can advocate for afterschool! You know firsthand the profound impact afterschool has; all you have to do is tell your story and you can be an effective advocate for sustaining and expanding support of afterschool programs in your community.

Useful Afterschool Advocacy Links

[Iowa Afterschool Alliance Advocacy Guide](#)

[Iowa Afterschool Alliance Linktree](#)

[Afterschool Alliance – Reaching Policy Makers](#)

[Find Your Iowa Legislators](#)

LEGISLATOR OUTREACH IDEAS

SAMPLE FOR INVITING YOUR LEGISLATORS TO DAY ON THE HILL:

Subject: Iowa Afterschool Alliance Day on the Hill – Jan 23rd!

Dear Representative/Senator _____,

We are thrilled to invite you to the **Iowa Afterschool Alliance Day on the Hill**, taking place on **Thursday, January 23rd, from 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM in the Capitol Rotunda**. This is your opportunity to connect directly with Iowa's youth, program providers, and advocates who are shaping the future of afterschool programs across the state.

Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) is the industry leader for out-of-school programming in Iowa, providing resources and support to over 1,800 providers, community-based organizations, schools, state policymakers, and afterschool advocates. Our mission is to develop strong statewide systems of support for high-quality, affordable, and accessible before-school, afterschool, and summer programs.

Why Attend?

- **To Learn:** Explore the latest State of Afterschool in Iowa research, highlighting how these programs impact academic success, workforce readiness, and community safety.
- **To Engage:** Hear powerful stories from youth and providers about the transformative role afterschool programs play in their lives.
- **To Lead:** Show your commitment to supporting Iowa's families and workforce by helping expand opportunities for high-quality afterschool programs.

As a policymaker, your presence is vital. You'll gain firsthand insights into the challenges and successes of these programs while forging meaningful connections that can help shape policies to support Iowa's youth.

We would be honored to have you join us and lend your voice to this important conversation. Together, we can ensure that every child in Iowa has access to enriching afterschool opportunities that inspire and empower them!

Thank you for your dedication to the future of youth development in our state.

Sincerely,
Your Name
Contact Information

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SAMPLE ADVOCACY LETTER #1

Dear Representative/Senator _____,

[1st paragraph states the reason for your letter and who you are.]

I am writing to inform you what a tremendous difference our Learning for All Afterschool Program makes in our community. I work with this school-based program, which is funded by a federal grant, and know firsthand how it improves children's grades, keeps kids safe, benefits working families and has a positive effect on the entire community.

[2nd paragraph further explains your message and includes a personal account]

Our program helps several hundred working parents in our school district who otherwise would not have access to an afterschool program to enrich their children's lives during the hours after school. In addition, the Learning for All program provides our community's citizens with a proven history of success - a history that features improved student test scores, improved school attendance and more focused students. Successful afterschool programs like ours offer an academic environment that is critical in the 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. time period before most working parents can get home.

[3rd paragraph should summarize your message]

Our program provides a school-based environment where extended academic learning is the norm. Students in our afterschool program achieve better in math, reading and other subjects; have fewer behavioral problems; and have better attendance records. In addition, our program offers youth a safe place where they can learn during the peak hours that juveniles are typically victims of crime or engage in criminal activity themselves. One of the best things about the program is the way it brings together various community members and gets them actively involved in helping kids learn and grow.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Organization

Contact Information

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SAMPLE ADVOCACY LETTER #2

Dear Representative/Senator _____,

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself - include your name, school district, and which afterschool program you are connected to.

Paragraph 2: Include 2-3 sentences on why you love your afterschool program, what your community gains from having afterschool, and why it's important for students to be able to go to an afterschool program.

Paragraph 3: Thank your reader for taking the time to read your letter and make sure you re-state your concern. Provide a way for them to respond to your letter. Always add that you look forward to hearing their response on the issue. Now they know you expect an answer.

Sincerely,
Your Name/Organization/Contact Information

SAMPLE ADVOCACY LETTER #3

Dear Representative/Senator _____,

My name is **(your name)** and I reside in your district. I am writing to encourage you to support afterschool programs.

[Insert personal story about your program and the impact it has had on students, families, and/or your community].

Afterschool programs help keep youth safe, increase academic outcomes, and support students' mental and physical health. To meet the expanding and diverse needs of youth and families, we need to create new opportunities for more publicly-funded Out-of School Time (OST) programs and expanded learning experiences in Iowa.

You can show support for your local afterschool programs by: **[Insert how you would like your legislator to support]**

- Visiting your local out-of-school time programs
- Making afterschool a legislative priority for you
- Increasing state funding for program operations
- Encouraging local school district leaders to partner with established afterschool programs in your district to leverage community assets and resources
- Supporting policies that promote family engagement in programs
- Increased awareness & recognition of afterschool programs

Sincerely,
Your Name/Organization/Contact Information

LEGISLATOR OUTREACH IDEAS

SAMPLE FOR INVITE TO STATE LEGISLATOR FOR A IN-PERSON SITE VISIT

Dear Senator or Representative _____,

I would like to invite you and your staff to visit the **[Insert the Name of your Afterschool Program]**. Thanks to funding through the **(Insert grant/funding source)** program, our program provides **[Insert Number of Children Served and Age Level-Example, 300 elementary students]** with safe, educational activities between the critical hours of three o'clock and six o'clock. The program offers **[Insert specific focus of program-Example, Literacy, Math, Science, Counseling, Credit Recovery, Test Preparation activities, etc.]** to help students do better in school and develop an interest in learning.

I would like to make arrangements for an after school program tour. I will contact your office within the next couple weeks to follow up on this invitation and your availability. I am more than happy to work with your schedule. I am also planning to invite members of the local **[Rotary Club or any other community organization]** and the families of the students we serve. I know they will be excited to discuss with you the importance of keeping after school programs open and the many benefits afforded youth with these services.

A profile of our **[Insert the Name of your Afterschool Program]** has been enclosed for your review. I hope you will visit our program and our students. I look forward to speaking with you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

Organization

Phone Number

Email Address

Website (if available)

For additional information on how to host a successful site visit: <https://afterschoolalliance.org/reachPolicySiteVisit.cfm>