

Afterschool and Youth Advocacy Day

Thank you to everyone who helped make Advocacy Day 2008 a success! An estimated 300 participants took part in events this year at the Grand Staircase of the Massachusetts State House. The three featured speakers of the event, Senate Chairman Robert A. DeLeo, Senator Thomas McGee, and the Commissioner of Cambridge Police, Robert Haas all spoke of the opportunities and challenges facing young people today and the unique role that high-quality OST programs can play in preparing children and youth to be productive, engaged citizens. Three young women spoke to the value of afterschool in their lives. An overview of their remarks can be found below. Attendees left with very positive news from MAP legislative consultant Cathy DeVento that a large number of legislative offices sent staff to the event. That is a good sign that our message is being heard at the state house. Perhaps most inspiring, however, was watching groups of attendees organizing themselves and preparing to go speak to their legislators!

NOW is the time to act! The House is currently debating and preparing their FY2009 budget for a release sometime in April. We are all disappointed with the Governor's budget that flat-funds the DOE's Afterschool and Out-of-School Time Grants at \$2 million while increasing funding for Expanded Learning Time from \$13 to \$26 million. There is still time to call, write or visit your legislator to advocate for more equitable funding. We are asking for a \$31 million investment in the future of our children:

- Increase afterschool opportunities for children and youth at the Department of Education by increasing the ASOST quality grants - \$14 million.
- Reduce the waitlist by 20% for school-age child care at the Department of Early Education and Care - \$10 million
- Support the development of older youth and violence prevention programs at the Department of Public Health - \$7 million
- Support the establishment of the Afterschool and Out-of-School Time Public/Private Coordinating Council.

Budget Ask 2009: [Afterschool Budget Request](#)

Senate & House Leadership 2009: [Boston's Legislative Delegation](#)

Follow-up Tips: [Mini Advocacy Packet](#)

After School & Out of School Time Commission: [ASOST Report 2007](#)

Can we count on you?