RE: Testimony to the Appropriations Committee  
In Support of Funding for After School Programs

DATE: March 6, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

My name is David Meizels, Director of Operations for Educational Resources for Children, (also known as ERfC) located in Enfield, CT. ERfC has provided out-of-school time activities for Enfield children since 1994. ERfC provides school year and summer enrichment programs for over 500 children.

I am writing today on behalf of the children and families we serve in Enfield and for other communities in Connecticut. I urge you to recommend maintaining full funding in a separate line item for the State After School Grant in the Department of Education budget.

In order to run full-year quality afterschool programs for children and their families throughout the state, dollars must maintain grant sizes from $150,000 to $200,000. By recommending full After School Grant funding, more communities will be able to provide after school services.

Full funding will give us an opportunity to keep working with children we are serving during the school year, not only providing recreational and educational enrichment activities, but to infuse project-based academic support activities based on core standards. This funding allows us to work with children who are most vulnerable, and most likely to be on the wrong side of the achievement gap that exists between high-income and low-income students.

Afterschool programs also make it possible for many families to work during out-of-school time. In Enfield, over 55% of the children we serve need financial assistance in order to attend daily activities. Many of our families work multiple jobs. Losing the After School Grant funding would make it impossible for many to continue their current employment.

For many children in Enfield, afterschool hours are unsupervised time without activities or guidance. By supporting full funding as a separate line item in the Department of Education budget, we will be able provide essential services for children. In addition to healthy snacks and meals, afterschool programs provide a safe, well-supervised environment for kids to develop socially and academically through enriching activities.

Again, I urge you to recommend a separate line item for the State After School Grant in the Stater Department of Education Budget.

Thank you!

David Meizels, M.Ed.  
ERfC Director of Operations