

HOUSE BILL NO. 566

INTRODUCED BY G. HOLLENBAUGH

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE CARE, EDUCATION, AND SAFETY OF MONTANA'S CHILDREN AFTER SCHOOL; CREATING THE AFTERSCHOOL CAPACITY ACT; PROVIDING FOR GRANTS TO ENTITIES PROVIDING AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM; PROVIDING APPROPRIATIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, one in four Montana children in working families has no adult supervision when the child comes home from school; and

WHEREAS, there were no daily afterschool programs available for 82% of Montana elementary students from working families during the 2005-2006 school year, thus demonstrating a significant need for communities to provide safe and drug-free environments with caring adults during the critical afterschool hours; and

WHEREAS, children in afterschool programs demonstrate higher academic achievement, are less likely to display behavior problems, are less likely to use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and are less likely to commit a crime or participate in other high-risk behavior; and

WHEREAS, children and youth are three times more likely to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes, be in or cause a car crash, and engage in sexual activity between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. and more alcohol-related car crashes occurred in Montana between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. than at any other hours of the day; and

WHEREAS, regular attendees at the Montana 21st Century Community Learning Centers show a 53% improvement in reading scores and a 52% improvement in math scores, and teachers reported significant improvement in behavior such as turning homework in on time, class participation, motivation to learn, and getting along well with other students; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Afterschool Network is a statewide coalition working together to increase the availability and quality of afterschool opportunities whose partners include Big Brothers Big Sisters of Montana, the Montana Board of Crime Control, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Early Childhood Services Bureau, Girl Scouts of the Big Sky Council, Junior Achievement of Southwest Montana, MEA-MFT, the Montana Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, the Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network, the Montana Council, Boy Scouts of America, the Montana Office of Public Instruction's 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the Montana Parent Teacher Association, the Montana Recreation and Parks

Association, the Montana School Boards Association, the Montana Small School Alliance, the Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development, Montana State University's Early Childhood Project, School Administrators of Montana, and the Flagship Program of the Office of Civic Engagement at the University of Montana.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Short title -- definitions. (1) [Sections 1 through 7] may be cited as the "Afterschool Capacity Act".

(2) As used in [sections 1 through 7], the following definitions apply:

(a) "Afterschool program" means a school or community-based program that serves school-aged children outside of the regular school day.

(b) "Department" means the department of public health and human services.

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Afterschool program grants. (1) The department shall administer the funds available for afterschool programs. The department shall use the funds to provide competitive grants to applicants. Applicants may include public schools, community organizations, and units of local government. Grant funds must be used to support new and existing afterschool programs. Grant funds may be used to leverage federal funds.

(2) An afterschool program must consist of a partnership between at least one school and at least one community organization. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other community partners, including but not limited to the following public and nonprofit agencies and organizations:

(a) child care providers;

(b) counties and other units of local government;

(c) faith-based organizations;

(d) businesses;

(e) educational entities, such as vocational education programs, school-to-work programs, community colleges, and universities;

(f) recreational programs;

(g) cultural programs; and

(h) other community service entities.

(3) In awarding grants, priority must be given to programs seeking funds for quality enhancement,

prevention programming, or increased capacity to serve additional kindergarten students.

(4) In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants are required to demonstrate the ability to provide a 25% cash or in-kind match for grant funds received.

(5) The department may adopt rules to prescribe application forms and procedures and to implement the grant program.

(6) The department may contract for the administration of the afterschool program.

NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Needs assessment.** The department shall conduct a needs assessment to identify communities with the greatest need for new or expanded afterschool programs.

NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Evaluation.** Afterschool program participants may assist the department and the office of public instruction in drafting an evaluation instrument and developing a process for assessing the effectiveness of afterschool programs. In addition to academic achievement, evaluations must track changes in risk and protective factors through the Montana youth risk behavior survey conducted by the office of public instruction, the Montana prevention needs assessment survey conducted by the department, and school discipline reports. Afterschool program evaluations may be incorporated into the office of public instruction's existing data collection system.

NEW SECTION. **Section 5. Resource reviews.** Afterschool program participants shall study the resources available in Montana to providers of afterschool programs and make recommendations for better coordination and increased efficiency of state resources.

NEW SECTION. **Section 6. Quality standards.** Afterschool program participants shall identify voluntary quality standards. Afterschool programs must be designed to enhance academic achievement and positive youth development. To achieve these goals, programs shall strive toward meeting standards of a high-quality afterschool program. Identifying these standards ensures that children and youth participating in afterschool programs are receiving the highest-quality care and an effective education.

NEW SECTION. **Section 7. Technical assistance.** The afterschool program participants may provide technical assistance to other afterschool programs in addition to providing training for afterschool staff in the areas of youth development and behavioral problem prevention. Technical assistance must include the

dissemination of resources that aid in starting and sustaining quality afterschool programs, such as best practices in program management and implementation.

NEW SECTION. Section 8. Appropriations -- administrative costs. (1) There is appropriated from the state general fund to the department of public health and human services \$525,000 in fiscal year 2008 and \$525,000 in fiscal year 2009 for the afterschool program.

(2) The department may use up to 10% of the appropriation for fiscal year 2008 to administer the afterschool program or contract for the administration of the program and to conduct the needs assessment under [section 3].

NEW SECTION. Section 9. Codification instruction. [Sections 1 through 7] are intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 53, chapter 4, and the provisions of Title 53, chapter 4, apply to [sections 1 through 7].

NEW SECTION. Section 10. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2007.

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