

- USD No. 480

Sarah Foreman of Liberal Area Coalition for Families announced that they will partner with USD No. 480, the Afterschool Alliance, and dozens of other national organizations today in organizing more than 9,000 rallies around the country in support of afterschool programs. The 14th annual Lights On Afterschool will be the largest nationwide rally for afterschool ever held.



“We are delighted to join these rallies, which are sending a powerful message about the urgent need for more afterschool programs,” Foreman said. “Afterschool programs do so much for our children, our families and our communities. They expose kids to horizon-expanding opportunities – designing and building robots, working with students and professors from local colleges and universities, mentoring from local business and community leaders, and so much more. They also help keep kids physically fit, and help improve student attendance and work habits during the regular school day. Of course, the unmet demand for afterschool programs is enormous, and funding is tight. With Lights On Afterschool, Americans are saying they want the lights on after school for our kids.”

USD 480 Director of Federal Programs, Sheri King, welcomed LACF’s support. “We’re grateful for all our Lights On Afterschool partners, and for the work they do on behalf of afterschool programs and the kids who attend them, Their support makes the message of Lights On Afterschool all the more compelling. We share their conviction that afterschool programs are essential because they inspire children to learn, keep them safe, and help working families. Today, we’ll join together with thousands of other organizations and more than one million Americans in speaking out for afterschool programs.”

Funding for afterschool programs has not kept up with demand, and more than 15 million children are alone and supervised after the school days ends.

Lights On Afterschool was launched in October 2000 with celebrations in more than 1,200 communities nationwide. The event grew in 2001 to more than 3,600 events and more than 7,500 in 2008.

This October, more than one million Americans will celebrate Lights On Afterschool across the United States and at military bases around the world.

USD 480's after school programs serve approximately 600 students in eight different schools: Project BEST at Sunflower and Cottonwood Intermediate schools, Project ROCK at Lincoln, Washington, Garfield, and McKinley elementary schools; and Project SOAR at Southlawn and McDermott Elementary Schools. Students participating in the afterschool programs engage in enrichment opportunities, tutoring, homework assistance, and additional academic skill building activities. For more information about the 21st CCLC afterschool programs contact Sheri King at 604-2400.