

NJDOE News

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DOE Announces 10 New 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Lights on Afterschool Day Highlights Importance of Afterschool Programs

Ten new 21st Century Community Learning Centers opened this month after receiving \$5.1 million in federal funding, Department of Education officials announced today as part of "Lights on Afterschool!" Day, a national initiative that promotes the importance of quality after-school programs that keep children safe, help working families and inspire learning.

The new after-school programs, which give students in grades four through 12 tutoring and other academic services, as well as arts and physical activities, join 45 other active centers that serve more than 15,000 children in the state.

"We are committed to supporting after-school programs that provide enriching opportunities in a secure environment for children who may otherwise not receive them," said Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy. "Lights on Afterschool!" shines a light on the importance of these programs. The department looks forward to working with these and other fine initiatives that are focused on addressing student needs and preparing them for success in the 21st Century."

The 10 new 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant recipients and their servicing school districts are:

- Arts & Education Center (Carteret School District, Middlesex County);
- Camden County Vocational School District (Camden County);
- Greater Paterson OIC (Paterson School District, Passaic County);
- Jewish Renaissance Foundation (Perth Amboy School District, Middlesex County);
- LEAP Academy University Charter School (Camden County);
- Middle Earth (Bound Brook School District and South Bound Brook School District, Somerset County);
- Mullica Township School District (Atlantic County);
- Pemberton Township School District (Burlington County);
- Plainfield Community Outreach, Inc. (Plainfield School District, Union County); and
- Tri-County Community Action Agency (Bridgeton School District, Cumberland County).

The following programs are participating in Lights on Afterschool! celebrations today: Liberty Science Center in Jersey City, Hudson County; Gloucester City School District, Gloucester City, Camden County; Egg Harbor Regional School District, Egg Harbor, Atlantic County; Perth Amboy School District, Perth Amboy, Middlesex County; Ventnor City School District, Ventnor, Atlantic County; Passaic Workforce Investment Board, Paterson, Passaic County; and the LEAP Academy University Charter School in Camden, Camden County.

The primary goal of a 21st Century Community Learning Center is to help children who attend low-performing schools and live in high-poverty areas with academic, physical, artistic and cultural enrichment during out-of-school time hours, so that they may attain the skills necessary to meet state core curriculum content standards.

In order to qualify for the grant, schools must either receive Title I funding for schoolwide programs have a minimum of 30 percent of its student population from low-income families. Low-income families are defined as those families whose children receive free lunch and/or free milk.

All centers must have activities that cover all of the five components: academic enrichment, cultural and artistic, positive youth development, physical activity, and parental involvement. In addition, the centers must offer literacy and other educational services to the families of the participating students.

In addition to the 21st Century Community Learning Center grants, the state has invested \$15 million in funding for after-school programs run by the New Jersey After 3 organization. Those programs are projected to serve 15,000 children in the coming year. All told, after-school programs in New Jersey serve more than 30,000 children in the state.

Further information about 21st Century Community Learning Centers can be found online here:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/21cclc/>. For more information, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.

Here is further information about the Lights on Afterschool! events in New Jersey:

Liberty Science Center
251 Phillip Street, Jersey City
2 to 5 p.m.

Gloucester City School District
Mary Ethel Costello School
520 Cumberland Street, Gloucester City
2:45 to 5 p.m.

Egg Harbor City School District
Rittenberg Middle School (Gymnasium)
28 Philadelphia Ave, Egg Harbor City
3:30 to 5:00 pm

Perth Amboy School District
William C. McGinnis Middle School
271 State Street, Perth Amboy
3:30 to 5:40 p.m.

Ventnor City School District
Ventnor Educational Community Complex (VECC)
400 N. Lafayette Avenue, Ventnor
4:30 to 6 p.m.

Passaic Workforce Investment Board
Eastside Park, Gazebo Area
800 Broadway, Paterson
3 to 7 p.m.

LEAP Academy University Charter School
LEAP High School Courtyard
549 Cooper Street, Camden
5 to 6 p.m.