



## Youth Community Connections Minnesota's Statewide Afterschool Alliance

### **2009 Legislative Summary**

As mandated by the constitution, the 2009 Legislative Session ended at midnight on May 18<sup>th</sup>. The Legislature is not expected to meet again until February 2010. Unfortunately, the Legislature and Governor were unable to reach a compromise in solving the state's massive budget deficits this year. At the end of the session there was still a \$2.7 billion dollar budget deficit that needed to be balanced. The Legislature proposed various tax increases (new income tax bracket for highest income earners and increasing the alcohol tax), which would have generated \$1 billion in new revenues and used to help mitigate steep cuts. In addition to new revenues, the Legislature proposed shifting payments to schools from the current biennium which ends on June 30<sup>th</sup> to the new biennium which begins July 1, 2009.

These proposals were vetoed by the Governor who has vowed not to increase taxes. The Governor stated he wouldn't call a special session and committed to solving the budget deficit himself through the power of the line-item veto and through the unallotment process after the start of the new fiscal year, July 1, 2009. The Governor is calling his cabinet together this week to begin planning for the unallotment process after the start of the fiscal year.

It is important to note that the Governor still maintains the right to call the Legislature back into Special Session if he chooses not to exercise his unallotment process.

Below is a summary of key initiatives affecting programming for children and youth during the non-school hours.

### **Omnibus Health and Human Services Finance Bill**

The appropriation for the [Afterschool Community Learning Grants](#) was carried in the Education bill in 2007, but this year it was carried in the Health and Human Services bill because there was no money available in the Education budget for the grants. The final proposal to keep the program funded was to transfer federal stimulus money from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Education. This transfer was included in the House proposal, but not in the Senate proposal. It was **not** included in

the final conference committee report and therefore current grants will end June 30, 2009.

The Health and Human Services Finance conference committee report was passed by the House and Senate on May 11. The Governor signed the bill on May 14, but included a line item veto of a \$381 million appropriation for General Assistance Medical Care Grants. The House attempted an override of the line item veto on May 17, but the effort was unsuccessful.

The final bill did include resources for the [Statewide Health Improvement Program](#) (SHIP) through the Department of Health. SHIP was developed in response to the 2007 Minnesota Legislature's request to develop a plan for statewide health promotion to address the rising cost of health and health care in our state. SHIP, which is an expanded version of the Steps to a Healthier Minnesota model, will help Minnesotans live longer, better, healthier lives by reducing the burden of chronic disease.

SHIP efforts will focus on obesity (through physical inactivity and unhealthy eating) and tobacco as the key risk factors to target interventions in fiscal years 2010-2011. With those risk factors, we will be addressing the top three preventable causes of illness and death in the United States. SHIP implementation will begin in July 2009, after a competitive process, when grants will be distributed to local public health boards and tribal governments across Minnesota. Grantees will be required to create community action plans, assemble community leadership teams, and establish partnerships. To improve the health of Minnesotans, grantees will utilize policy, systems and environmental changes in four settings: schools, work sites, health care and community.

*If you aren't already working with your local public health department you may want to begin partnering with them as they implement their plans.*

### **Omnibus DEED Bill**

The omnibus jobs and economic development appropriations conference committee report passed the Senate on May 4 and the House on May 5. It included the following funding (per year) for youth programs:

\$3.5 million for the [Minnesota Youth Program](#)  
\$750,000 grant to [Minnesota Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs](#) (requires 25% non-state match)

\$1.2 million for the [Minneapolis summer youth employment program](#)  
\$558,000 for the [Saint Paul summer youth employment program](#)  
\$1 million for the [YouthBuild program](#)

The bill also included loan forgiveness for the city of Saint Paul of about \$30 million, which caused the governor to veto the bill. The legislature acted quickly and immediately re-passed the bill without the loan forgiveness.

The Governor signed the re-passed bill on May 14, but used his line item veto to remove several appropriations. They were:

- The Indigenous Earthkeepers program for American Indian youth
- Grant to a Southeast Asian mutual assistance non profit
- Grant to the Minnesota Film and TV Board
- Funds for a workers memorial on the state capitol grounds
- Grant to MPR for digital conversion
- The Legislative Coordinating Commission

### **Omnibus K-12 Education Bill**

The omnibus K-12 education conference committee report passed both the House and Senate on May 13. It was signed by the Governor on May 16.

The bill holds education funding flat for the next two years (\$13.7 billion in 10-11 and \$14.4 billion in 12-13), avoiding the 3% cut proposed by the Senate. The bill does not include the payment shift proposed by the House. (However, the tax bill passed as session ended would implement such a payment shift.)

The bill includes reforms to several areas of education including charter schools, special education, testing, and integration aid. It also includes mandate reductions and allows for an alternative path to graduation for students who are unable to pass the standardized test required for graduation.

Funding for the Department of Education is cut by 3% in order to free up money to fund two of the Governor's proposals – the Reading Corps and the Math and Science Teacher Centers.

### **Omnibus Public Safety Appropriation Bill**

The Omnibus Public Safety appropriations conference committee report was passed by the Senate on May 11 and the House on May 12. It was signed by the Governor on May 15.

The bill includes:

- Language that requires funding for [Youth Intervention Programs](#) cannot be reduced by more than 3% from the level of base funding they received in the 08-09 biennium.

- Language that puts grants to youth intervention programs as one of the top priorities for the federal stimulus dollars the Office of Justice Programs will be receiving.

## **Omnibus Cultural and Outdoor Resources Finance Bill**

The Omnibus Cultural and Outdoor Resources finance conference committee report was passed by the House and Senate on May 18. It appropriates the money from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.

The bill includes:

- \$1 million each year for Civics Education. The appropriation is in the form of grant money to the Minnesota Center for the Humanities, and will be distributed to the [Kids Voting Minnesota](#), the Learning Law and Democracy Foundation, and the [YMCA Youth In Government programs](#)
- \$500,000 each year for **children's museums**, with half the money going for one in Duluth and the other half for one in Saint Paul.
- \$500,000 each year for programming at the [Minnesota Science Museum](#).
- \$2 million each year for programming at **Minnesota zoos**. Three quarters of the funding is reserved for the Minnesota Zoo, the Como Zoo, and the Duluth Zoo.
- Department of Education Appropriations
  - \$2 million each year for a grant program to provide arts education. The grants are available to school districts.
  - \$4 million each year for a grant program to provide access to arts an arts education. The grants are available to school districts, community education programs, libraries, and other community organizations.
  - \$5 million each year for grants allocated under existing formulas to the 12 Minnesota Regional Library Systems to provide educational opportunities in the arts, history, literary arts, and cultural heritage of Minnesota.