

WASHINGTON, DC- On Thursday, July 19, the U.S. House approved \$10 million for Congressman Steny H. Hoyer's (D-MD) Full-Service Community Schools initiative to encourage coordination between public schools, community-based organizations, and public/private partnerships to provide comprehensive educational and social services for students, families, and communities. The funding was included in the FY 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

"Classroom education is only a piece of the puzzle when it comes to ensuring that all children succeed. Full-service community schools take an innovative 'big picture' approach to educating America's children by utilizing community-based, public-private partnerships that provide for the seamless integration of academic, development, and health services for children and their families. This seed money will provide resources to encourage these crucial partnerships in schools across the country and ensure the best use of resources to help children learn and communities thrive," stated Rep. Hoyer.

The \$10 million allocation is based on legislation Rep. Hoyer has introduced with Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE), the Full-Service Community Schools Act of 2007 (HR 2323; S. 1391), to authorize \$200 million in grants for full-service community schools and their partners at the local and state levels. The funding will be made available as competitive grants to eligible consortiums to assist public elementary or secondary schools in coordinating or providing no less than three services. Services may include: parenting education; literacy/reading programs for youth and families; community service training; mentoring and other youth development programs; job training/career counseling services; nutrition services; and primary health and dental care, among others.

Rep. Hoyer's legislation builds on the success of Maryland's Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care and Family Education Centers, or "Judy Centers", which are early education centers serving at-risk children birth through age five and their families. Judy Centers, named after Congressman Hoyer's late wife and educator Judith P. Hoyer, are unique because they promote school readiness through collaboration among community-based agencies and organizations located within each Center. This integrated approach to offer children and families a comprehensive set of services through their schools, is the concept behind the Full-Service Community Schools Act. However, while Judy Centers are early childhood-focused, Rep. Hoyer's legislation aims to build partnerships at the K-12 level.

"I learned about the potential of full-service community schools from my wife Judy who was dedicated to improving the quality of early education programs. This integrated approach to education, which has been an unqualified success at the early childhood level in Maryland,

improves the coordination, delivery, effectiveness, and efficiency of services to children and families,” Rep. Hoyer said.

State evaluations of the Judy Centers have shown increased access to high-quality programs and services for low-income and special needs children and that they improve school readiness and minimize the “achievement gap” at the start of first grade.

“In 2000, Maryland established Judy Centers, which, in bundling early care and education, health, and family support services in high-need areas, have proven instrumental in promoting school readiness. The Full-Service Community Schools Act, introduced by Congressman Hoyer and Senator Nelson, will give communities across the nation the resources to replicate the tremendous success we’ve had in Maryland,” said Dr. Nancy Grasmick, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools.

The Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill must now be reconciled with the Senate appropriations bill, before returning to the House for a final vote.

[For more information see the one-page summary of the Full Service Community Schools Act of 2007.](#)

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