



## 2014 Arizona Out-of-School Time Survey

District: **CD 7**

Candidate: **Mary Rose Wilcox**

### **QUESTION 1:**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative is a federally-funded program that provides free high-quality afterschool, before school, and summer programming to children in high-poverty areas. Students who participate in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs often show improvements in their math and English grades, as well as in classroom behavior and participation. Additionally, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and other affordable out-of-school time (OST) programs alleviate the burden of afterschool care for tens of thousands of Arizona families. Only 5% of Arizona children who are eligible to participate in a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program are currently enrolled, due largely to limited federal funding, which is currently at less than 50% of its authorized level. Do you support continued funding of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program, and if so, at what level?

### **ANSWER:**

“Yes, these centers provide critical programs and a safe environment for children - particularly children in under-served areas - that offer instruction in reading, math and other activities critical to helping students meet state and local standards. Additionally, CCLC provides literacy and other instructive activities for families who participate in these learning centers.

I have a long, positive record of working to improve the health, education, and safety of children in OST settings. I founded and still sponsor a late night basketball league, which keeps young people off the streets and in a productive environment on summer nights. The league has been in operation for 31 years. I have spearheaded fundraising efforts to keep "Grant Park", an important local park open during an era of city budget cuts. We use the Grant Park rec center to run our basketball program. I have been the official Head Start representative for Maricopa County for 20 years, and helped create the local "Kool Kids" program, which provides access to swimming pools for low income children. I have also assisted in the creation of library programs for summer reading. For 16 years I have spearheaded the D-Backs Jam that brings 2000 5th graders to a Diamondbacks baseball game for doing community work.

These programs are essential in promoting successful learning environments. I will fight in Congress to fund programs like CCLC at the highest level possible.”



## QUESTION 2:

Jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) professions are becoming a larger share of the job market, and the demand for skilled workers in these fields is increasing. However, many students graduating from high school are not prepared for the college-level math and science required for the vast majority of these jobs. With young people spending less than 20% of their waking hours in school, out-of-school time programs are essential for increasing interest in and aptitude for STEM – and are proven to do just that. The recently introduced **Supporting Afterschool STEM Act** will create a grant process to support afterschool/out-of-school STEM programs. Will you pledge to support legislation that provides funding for out-of-school time STEM programs?

## ANSWER:

“National studies indicate afterschool programs are crucial to building STEM relevant skills. I believe a strong STEM educational program is essential in ensuring that the US and Arizona remain competitive in our modern global business environment. Arizona has a thriving bioscience industry that began in 1997. Our bioscience industry must have a pool of qualified individuals to remain successful. Our educational system must be adequately funded for Arizona and the US to remain competitive in this 21st century environment. Any STEM initiatives must promote and include underrepresented minorities and women. I am prepared to utilize my history and experience of advocacy for afterschool educational programs for under-served populations in Arizona in appropriating funding for STEM educational programs for all students.”



### **QUESTION 3:**

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is an initiative that began in the 1990s to assist low-income families in obtaining child care, including through out-of-school time programs, so that parents can work or receive job training. In Arizona, these subsidies are administered through the Department of Economic Security. In FY 2013, over 25,000 Arizona children were served by these subsidies; however, over 6,000 children who are eligible for services remain on the waitlist. Without child care assistance, families are often forced to lose time at work, go on welfare, or leave their children in low-quality and less stable care. As a Member of Congress, will you support continued funding for the CCDF, and if so, at what level?

### **ANSWER:**

“I will work with and assist the Arizona Department of Economic Security to secure funding at the highest level possible. Affordable child care is often not available for low-income families. Unfortunately, this often prevents parents from obtaining gainful employment resulting in the inability of families to make economic ends meet. The Child Care and Development Fund assistance results in economic self-reliance and a stable environment for children. I will support and vote for continued funding for the Child Care and Development Fund.”