

SENATE BILL 780

By Ramsey

AN ACT to authorize a pilot program of after-school learning programs through the Boys and Girls Clubs of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, many factors contribute to the lack of academic success of youth from disadvantaged circumstances; and

WHEREAS, of these factors, young people's out-of-school activities have a major impact on their academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, in its landmark report, *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Non-School Hours*, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development confirmed, "In addition to formal schooling, what young people do with their time outside the classroom has a tremendous impact on their present and future well-being." The study showed that latch-key youth left alone at home or free to roam the streets and "hang out" were destined to achieve less than their full potential in life; and

WHEREAS, similarly, research by Dr. Reginald Clark demonstrated that how students from disadvantaged circumstances used their time in school and out of school is an important predictor of their academic success; and

WHEREAS, Clark found that low-achieving students spend the majority of their non-school hours involved in activities that have little benefit to them during their in-school time. On

the other hand, high-achieving students participate in more activities that reinforce the skills and knowledge learned in school; and

WHEREAS, to test the effectiveness of *Project Learn* of the Boys and Girls Clubs, Dr. Steven Schinke of Columbia University's School of Social Work performed an evaluation at Boys and Girls Clubs in public housing developments across the United States.

Schinke's study, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, compared youth in clubs with *Project Learn* to youth in clubs without the program and youth in generic after-school programs. *Project Learn* participants showed:

- 15% higher overall grade point average;
- 16% higher overall grade point average in mathematics;
- 20% higher overall grade point average in history;
- 14% higher overall grade point average in science;
- 20% higher overall grade point average in spelling; and

WHEREAS, results from the evaluation clearly prove the value of club-based educational enhancement programs for disadvantaged youth. Data collection from youth, teachers, and school records dramatically demonstrate the program's impact as long as thirty months after the initiative began. Schinke concludes, "Boys and Girls Clubs of America can rightfully take credit for helping youth in essential areas of academic achievement, school behavior and study skills"; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. The commissioner of education is authorized to make grants of thirty-thousand dollars (\$30,000) to each of six (6) Boys Club and Girls Club in Tennessee, two (2) in each grand division as selected by the commissioner of education, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of such clubs implementing the "Project Learn" after-school program in the areas served by each club. Each club shall report to the commissioner, in a format prescribed by the

commissioner, the purposes for which such grant was used and the results of the “Project Learn” program conducted by such club.

SECTION 2. This act shall have no effect unless funds are appropriated in the general appropriations act to pay the grants provided for herein.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001, the public welfare requiring it.