**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[DATE]**

**CONTACT:
[Your Program Name]**

**[Contact Name]**
**[Phone]**

**[E-mail]**

***Lights on Afterschool* Celebration Features [name and title of visitor]
*[Your City]*** *Event Part of Nationwide Celebration of Afterschool Programming*

**[Note: Include a picture of your event if possible!]**

**[Your City]-** Children, parents, business and community leaders came together today at **[program name]** to celebrate the achievements of students participating in afterschool programs as part of Georgia’s *Lights On Afterschool* celebration. This event, which is part of the 17th annual nationwide *Lights On Afterschool* celebration, brought leaders together to learn about and celebrate the positive results of afterschool programming.

**[Add event specifics, similar to the following]:** Attendees saw students conduct scientific experiments and perform music, while **[insert names of any leaders in attendance, such as your mayor, school officials, business leaders]**, parents and students discussed the importance of afterschool programs.

“Throughout Georgia, afterschool programs provide the kind of enriching environment that has been consistently proven to be a keystone to academic success,” said Katie Landes, Director of the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network. “Afterschool programs have been shown to increase attendance, improve behavior and raise student achievement.”

According to data released in 2014, only 16% of Georgia’s K-12 youth participate in afterschool programs, while nearly 600,000 more of Georgia’s children who are not in an afterschool program would likely participate if one were available in their community. Despite recent threats to funding, afterschool has broad, bipartisan support. A recent poll from PDK International found that 94% of Georgians see afterschool as extremely/very important.

 **[Add a quote from attendee such as a parent or a community leader, similar to the following]:** "Children rely on programs such as **[your program]** for a safe and enriching place to go when the school day ends,” said **[parent or community leader]**. “It is nice to come out and celebrate what these programs do for Georgia’s youth year round.”

**Insert a description of your program here – how long your program been in operation, how many children are enrolled in your program, the communities/neighborhoods that you serve, any feedback you have gotten from K-12 teachers and/or parents about the impact of your program on a child, etc. We recommend that descriptions be limited to 60-80 words.**

Georgia’s *Lights on Afterschool* celebration is a joint effort between the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network, a public-private collaborative dedicated to advancing, connecting and supporting quality afterschool programs throughout Georgia, and Voices for Georgia’s Children, a public-private child policy and advocacy organization.

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About The Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network

The Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) ([www.afterschoolga.org](http://www.afterschoolga.org)) is a public-private collaborative that envisions a day when all communities in Georgia have the resources to provide exceptional afterschool programming. Our mission is to advance, connect, and support quality afterschool programs to promote the success of children and youth throughout Georgia.

About Voices for Georgia’s Children

Established in 2003, Voices for Georgia’s Children ([www.georgiavoices.org](http://www.georgiavoices.org)) is a nonprofit child policy and advocacy organization that envisions a Georgia where all children will thrive because they are safe, healthy, educated, connected to family and community, and prepared to be productive and responsible citizens. Our mission is to promote equity, quality, and accessibility in systems created to serve children’s needs. We are dedicated to advancing policies and implementation actions that ensure the best possible outcomes for children.