

**STATE OF ARKANSAS**  
**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**PROCLAMATION**

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: The citizens of Arkansas stand firmly committed to quality afterschool programs and opportunities because these programs provide safe, challenging, and engaging learning experiences that help children develop social, emotional, physical, and academic skills. These programs support working families by ensuring their children are safe and productive after the regular school day ends. They build stronger communities by involving students, parents, business leaders, and adult volunteers in the lives of young people. They promote positive relationships among youth, families, and adults, and they engage families, schools, and community partners in advancing the welfare of our children; and

WHEREAS: During the COVID-19 crisis, afterschool programs have risen to the moment to support youth through innovation and through providing virtual programming to keep kids engaged, caring for children of essential workers, providing meals and learning supports, checking in on youth and families' wellbeing; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas's leaders have provided significant guidance in the areas of community involvement, in the education and well-being of our youth, grounded in the principle that quality afterschool programs are key to helping our children become successful adults; and

WHEREAS: Lights On Afterschool, the national celebration of afterschool programs held this year on October 28, 2021, promotes the importance of quality afterschool programs in the lives of children, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS: Millions of families report they would enroll their child in an afterschool program if one were available; and

WHEREAS: Many afterschool programs across the country are facing funding shortfalls so severe they are being forced to close their doors and turn off their lights; and

WHEREAS: The State of Arkansas is committed to investing in the health and safety of all young people by providing expanded learning opportunities that will help close the achievement gap and prepare young people to compete in the global economy;


NOW, THEREFORE, I, ASA HUTCHINSON, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, as

**LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL DAY**

across the State, and I encourage my fellow citizens to engage in innovative afterschool programs and activities that ensure the lights stay on and the doors stay open for all children after school.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 15<sup>th</sup> day of October, in the year of our Lord 2021.



  
Asa Hutchinson, Governor

  
John Thurston, Secretary of State