

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

Inspiring Learning. Supporting Families.  
Earning Results.

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Nancy Boehm, Raider's ARK, Arcadia, WI



EVOLUTIONS program at the Yale Peabody Museum

Afterschool programs inspire kids to learn, help them make better decisions, and give parents peace of mind. Programs spark greater interest in school so students attend school more often, get better grades, and are more likely to graduate.<sup>1</sup> But the demand for these programs far exceeds the supply. Nationwide, only 1 in 3 families who want afterschool for their children has access to programs.<sup>2</sup>

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers provide afterschool and summer learning opportunities in every state. Programs are selected for funding based on their ability to meet the needs of students and families and their connection to education priorities in the state. These Community Learning Centers provide:<sup>3</sup>

- ▶ opportunities for new, hands-on, academically enriching learning experiences to meet the challenging state academic standards;
- ▶ a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, focusing on subjects like STEM, physical fitness and wellness, drug and violence prevention, nutrition and health education, service learning, youth development, and arts and music;
- ▶ activities that tie into in-demand industry sectors or occupations that are designed to reinforce and complement the academic program of participating students, including, but not limited to, financial and environmental literacy, career readiness, internships, and apprenticeships; and
- ▶ families of students with opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

## Community Learning Centers by the numbers

1,685,036 children and youth served<sup>4</sup>  
183,461 adult family members served<sup>4</sup>  
11,512 school-based and community centers<sup>4</sup>

Programs stay open (on average)<sup>5</sup>  
13.8 hours per week  
5 days per week  
32 weeks per year



**Afterschool  
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[afterschoolalliance.org](http://afterschoolalliance.org)

# Strong Results

Having afterschool choices helps students learn and grow, helps parents balance work and life, and helps employers hire the local workforce they need in the present and the future.

## Supporting Academic Success

- ▶ Students who regularly participate in Community Learning Centers improved their school attendance, class participation and behavior, homework completion, and reading and math achievement scores and grades.<sup>6,7</sup>
- ▶ Regular participation in afterschool programs helped narrow the achievement gap between high- and low-income students in math, improved academic and behavioral outcomes, and reduced school absences.<sup>8</sup>

## Supporting the Workforce of Today and Tomorrow

- ▶ Businesses want to hire problem solvers and team players. Students learn by doing in afterschool programs and develop the skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow.
- ▶ Jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math are driving global economic growth. Seven million students are getting opportunities to develop an interest and explore STEM in afterschool.<sup>9</sup>
- ▶ 8 in 10 parents say afterschool helps give them peace of mind and helps them keep their jobs.<sup>2</sup>

## Among students regularly attending a Community Learning Center:<sup>4</sup>



Close to 1 in 2  
**improved their  
math and Language  
Arts grades**



Close to 2 in 3  
**improved their  
homework completion  
and class participation**



Close to 3 in 5  
**improved their  
behavior in class**



Image(s) provided by The 50 State Afterschool Network

## Regular attendance produces greater gains

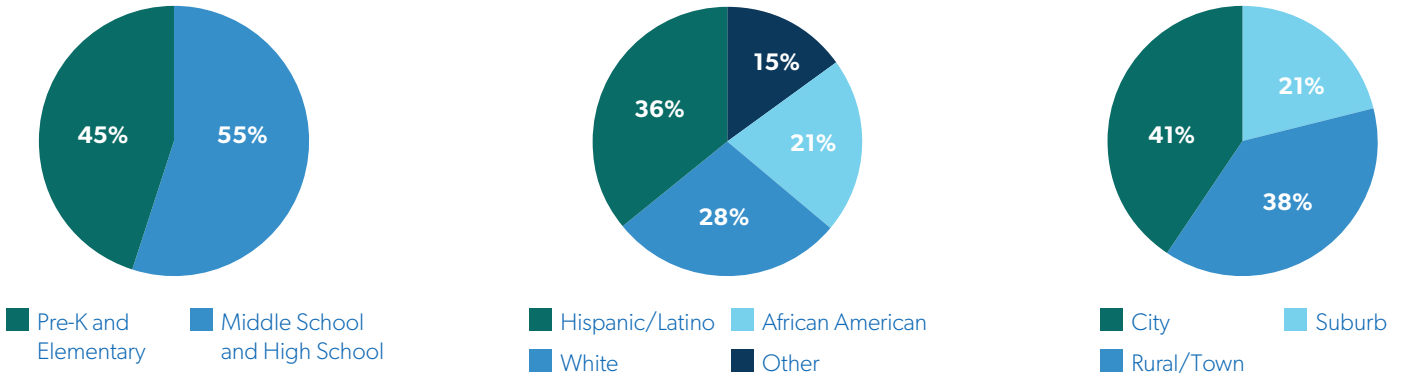
A study of approximately 3,000 low-income, ethnically diverse elementary and middle school students found that those who regularly attended high-quality programs (including Community Learning Centers) for more than two years gained up to 20 percentiles in standardized math test scores compared with peers who were routinely unsupervised during the afterschool hours. Students with lower program attendance gained 12 percentiles compared with their non-participating peers.<sup>10</sup>



# Reducing Barriers

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers provide essential support to students who are often underserved and offer creative, engaging learning opportunities to kids of all ages and backgrounds.

## Students served<sup>4,11</sup>



▶ 67% participate in the federal Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program<sup>4</sup>

▶ 13% have Limited English Proficiency<sup>4</sup>

## Driven by Local Needs

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers work closely with schools, youth and community groups, faith-based organizations, and businesses. Each program is shaped by the local community to best meet the needs of the people and organizations it serves. In turn, partners of each grantee contribute an average of \$67,000 to support programs.<sup>12</sup>

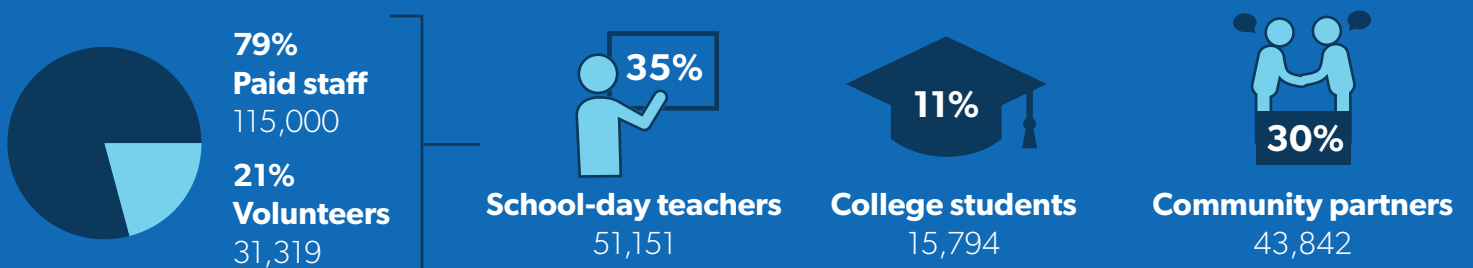
**Between 2006 and 2010, partners contributed more than \$1 billion.**



Close to **9 in 10** Community Learning Centers are located in schools<sup>4</sup>  
 Each grantee has an average of **9 partner organizations**.<sup>5</sup>  
 Among grantees:<sup>5</sup>

- ▶ **2 in 5 are community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private schools, and charter schools**
- ▶ **3 in 5 are school districts**

## Staff Profile<sup>4</sup> (based on 146,319 total staff)



# Funding and Unmet Demand

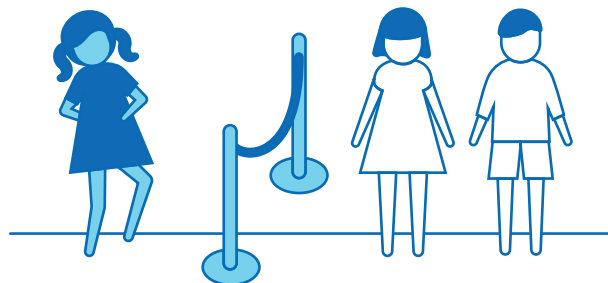
Parents across America want afterschool and summer programs for their children, but cost and lack of available programs are standing in their way.

For every child in an afterschool program, two are waiting to get in. And in rural communities, three children are waiting for every child enrolled.<sup>2</sup>

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants are the only federal funding source dedicated exclusively to providing afterschool and summer learning opportunities for children and youth. Over the course of 10 years, unmet demand for afterschool grew by 20 percent, but funding has remained flat.<sup>2,13</sup>

More than 21 million youth are eligible to attend Community Learning Centers, but funding allows only 1.7 million to participate.<sup>4,14</sup>

Only 1 in 3 requests for funding Community Learning Centers is awarded. Over the span of 10 years, \$4 billion in local grant requests were denied because of intense competition and lack of adequate federal funding.<sup>15</sup>



For every child in an afterschool program, two are waiting to get in.

## Annual cost of Community Learning Center programs

- ▶ **\$298,000** per grant<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ **\$1,510** per regular attendee<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ **\$122,000** per center<sup>5</sup>

## Every \$1 invested in afterschool programs saves \$3 by<sup>16</sup>

- ▶ Increasing kids' earning potential
- ▶ Improving kids' performance at school
- ▶ Reducing crime and welfare costs

## Sources

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## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

Find out more about access in your area.

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