

Afterschool programs increase engagement in school and reduce chronic absenteeism

During the 2021-2022 school year, **14.7 MILLION STUDENTS**—nearly 30% of K-12 students nationwide—were classified as chronically absent (i.e., missing 10% or more days of school).

The percentage of students who were chronically absent nearly doubled from the 2018-19 school year (30% vs. 16%), and currently available data for the 2022-2023 school year suggests that chronic absenteeism—which has been associated with poor academic performance and dropping out of school—while seeing a slight decrease, remains a serious issue. For example, although Alaska's rate of chronic absenteeism decreased from 46% to 43% for the 2022-2023 school year, it remained approximately 2.5 times as high as the state's chronic absenteeism rate during the 2019-2020 school year (17%). Similarly,

Utah saw a 4 percentage point decrease in its rate of chronic absenteeism, from 29% to 25%, however it remains significantly higher than the state's 9% chronic absenteeism rate during the 2019-2020 school year.

Research finds that 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool and summer learning programs have a positive impact on students' school-day attendance, as well as their engagement in learning, such as improving their attitudes and feeling of connectedness to school—helping to address the rise in chronic absenteeism that schools are facing.



AFTERSCHOOL IMPROVING SCHOOL-DAY ATTENDANCE



Nationally, **nearly 1 in 2 students** in 21st CCLC programs who had been chronically absent during the previous school year **improved their school day attendance**.

On average, students attending California's After School Education and Safety (ASES) and After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens (ASSETs) programs had **higher rates of school-day attendance** than students not participating in programs.

In addition to Ohio students participating in 21st CCLC programs having a **statistically significant lower unexcused absence rate** than their matched non-participating peers, **students who went to programs more frequently—for 60 days—had even lower rates of unexcused absences than those who attended for 30 days**.



AFTERSCHOOL HELPING STUDENTS FEEL MORE CONNECTED TO THE SCHOOL DAY

A vast majority of high school students in Delaware's 21st CCLC programs said that they **feel more connected to their school because of the program** (83%), while parents agreed that since attending the program, their child has **become more interested in school** (89%).



Students in Montana's 21st CCLC programs agreed that the program **helped them with their motivation to do well and stay in school** (71%), and 78% of parents agreed that the program had a **positive influence on their child's attitude toward school**.

More than 8 in 10 North Dakota 21st CCLC participants (83%) said that they **like school better** because they go to their afterschool program. North Dakota parents also valued the supports programs provided their children, with an overwhelming majority reporting that the program has **helped their child's attitude toward school improve** (70%).



AFTERSCHOOL INSPIRING LEARNING



More than 8 in 10 students in Arkansas 21st CCLC programs report that they **like the activities they do in the program** (89%), get to **try new things they've never done before**, (86%), and **take part in activities that make them think** (82%).

An overwhelming majority of Michigan 21st CCLC students agreed that their program **helped them learn school subjects in fun ways** (82%) and activities offered **helped them to do better in school** (77%). Program participants agreed that they **learned new skills** at the program (87%) and **were encouraged to be the best they can be** (88%), with high school participants even more likely to agree (93% and 95%, respectively).

North Dakota 21st CCLC students report that activities offered by programs **help them learn new things** (88%) and parents report that programs offer a variety of activities to **help their children learn** (86%). Moreover, evaluators found that students in 21st CCLC programs were more likely to **improve their engagement in learning** than their non-participating peers (71% vs. 58%).



AFTERSCHOOL FOSTERING A SENSE OF SAFETY AND SUPPORT

More than 9 in 10 New Hampshire 21st CCLC program participants said that they **felt safe** in their 21st CCLC program (98%), that they **belonged in the program** (96%), adults in the program let them know they **cared about them** (96%), and they **had an adult in the program who they could talk to** (95%).

Most students in Oregon's 21st CCLC programs said that they **felt safe** (92%) and a **sense of belonging** (81%) at their program, and that their program has **helped them to feel good about themselves** (75%), **get along with others** (75%), and **handle problems** (72%).

On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "almost never true" and 5 is "almost always true," Missouri 21st CCLC students rated highly that they:

felt safe in their program



enjoyed attending their program



felt like they belonged



felt like they mattered



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