



This is Afterschool in Maine

In Maine, Regional School District 13 (RSU 13) was able to support afterschool programs at all five of its schools serving K-8 students, including three elementary schools that did not previously have an existing program, and offer a robust summer program that provided a mix of academics and enrichment, all of which were free to students, thanks to an investment of approximately \$550,000 in American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds. RSU 13's afterschool and summer programs, led by veteran teachers and local community organizations, included hands-on enriching learning experiences, such as STEM activities, art, and trips to places such as South End beach, where through a partnership with the Herring Gut Science Center, students learned about different habitats and created a sustainable mural out of beach materials. Parents have expressed their gratitude for the program, stating, "Both of my children asked to return again next year multiple times during the program, starting on the first afternoon I picked them up." With their ARP ESSER funds, RSU 13 was able to serve an additional 157 students after school and 462 students over the summer, a more than 170% increase over the course of three years.

However, as American Rescue Plan and other pandemic relief funding expires, many Maine youth will lose their programs—and families and communities will lose essential supports—if action is not taken. In Maine, for every child in an afterschool program, 5 more would participate if a program were available. And a national fall 2023 survey of afterschool program providers found that nearly 3 in 4 are concerned about their program's long-term funding and future. Afterschool and summer programs across Maine are accelerating students' growth, supporting students' well-being, and helping working families. To keep their doors open, these programs need additional investments at the local, state, and federal levels.

IMPROVING SCHOOL-DAY ENGAGEMENT AND REDUCING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM







A 2023 U.S. Department of Education report on 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)—local before-school, afterschool, and summer learning programs that serve more than 1.3 million students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools—found that:

7 IN 10 students in the program demonstrated an **IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING**

NEARLY HALF of students who were **CHRONICALLY ABSENT** the previous year **IMPROVED THEIR SCHOOL-DAY ATTENDANCE**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ACCELERATE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC GROWTH AND SUPPORT THEIR WELL-BEING

Maine students in afterschool programs are:

-  Getting homework help (69%)
-  Engaging in STEM learning opportunities (70%)
-  Working on their reading and writing skills (52%)
-  Interacting with their peers and building social skills (92%)
-  Taking part in physical activities (89%)
-  Building confidence (82%)



93% of Maine parents are satisfied with their child's afterschool program

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

Maine parents agree that afterschool programs are:



Helping working parents keep their jobs **(83%)**



Providing working parents peace of mind knowing that their children are safe **(87%)**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT

An overwhelming majority of Maine parents favor public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs.



Research spanning several states shows that **EVERY \$1 INVESTED** in afterschool programs **SAVES AT LEAST \$3** by:

- ✓ Increasing kids' earning potential as adults
- ✓ Improving kids' performance at school
- ✓ Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency

With strong public support, a national survey found that approximately 8 in 10 registered voters said that afterschool programs are an absolute necessity for their community (79%) and that they want their federal, state, and local leaders to provide more funding for programs (80%).

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programs engage students in hands-on learning activities aimed at supporting their academic growth, provide a variety of enrichment activities to complement school-day learning, and offer educational and support services to the families of participating children. The 2023 Department of Education annual performance report of 21st CCLC found that among regular participants:



MORE THAN 1 IN 2 improved their GPA



7 IN 10 improved their engagement in learning



2 IN 5 saw a decrease in school suspensions

In Maine, 5,133 children in 58 communities take part in a 21st Century Community Learning Center. 21st CCLC grants are the only dedicated federal funding sources that support local communities' afterschool and summer programs. Demand for programming in Maine is so great that more than 1 out of every 3 applications was not funded during the most recent competition.

AFTERSCHOOL WORKS

Studies have shown that students regularly participating in quality afterschool programs attend school more often, are more engaged in school, get better grades, and are more likely to be promoted to the next grade. For example, in a 2023 report by the U.S. Department of Education on 21st CCLC programs nationally, Maine students in need of improvement made academic gains, with a majority of 4th through 8th grade Maine 21st CCLC participants demonstrating growth on the state's reading/language arts (58%) and math (57%) assessments. Additionally, nearly 1 in 4 elementary, middle, and high schoolers (24%) with an attendance rate below 90% the previous school year improved their school-day attendance. These findings are similar to a 2017 Market Decisions Research evaluation of 21st CCLC programs in Maine that found regularly attending low performing students improved their math (71%) and English language arts (ELA) assessment scores (64%), as well as their grades in math (53%) and ELA (48%).

