



# This is Afterschool in West Virginia

In West Virginia, Flipside Afterschool, which operates through the Tygart Valley United Way, received \$18,000 in American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds from Marion and Taylor County Boards of Education for the 2022-2023 school year. The funds were vital to sustaining their four sites located at East Fairmont, West Fairmont, Mannington, and Taylor County Middle Schools, supporting staff salaries and paying for classroom supplies. With ARP ESSER funds, the program was able to serve more than 200 middle school students, providing academic, wellness, and enrichment opportunities, in addition to a meal and transportation. Based on a pre- and post-assessment using the Student School Engagement Survey, 76% of students in the program increased their engagement in at least one subgroup—emotional, cognitive, or behavioral—with 42% of participants increasing their engagement in all three subgroups.

However, as American Rescue Plan and other pandemic relief funding expires, many West Virginia youth will lose their programs—and families and communities will lose essential supports—if action is not taken. In West Virginia, for every child in an afterschool program, 4 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 West Virginia 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> 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

West Virginia students in afterschool programs are:

-  Getting homework help (66%)
-  Engaging in STEM learning opportunities (73%)
-  Working on their reading and writing skills (56%)
-  Interacting with their peers and building social skills (98%)
-  Taking part in physical activities (84%)
-  Building confidence (84%)



**97%** of West Virginia parents are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program

## AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

West Virginia parents agree that afterschool programs are:



Helping working parents keep their jobs (77%)



Providing working parents peace of mind knowing that their children are safe (79%)

## AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT

An overwhelming majority of West Virginia 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%).

## 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 West Virginia, 12,090 children in 135 communities take part in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center. 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grants are the only dedicated federal funding sources that support local communities' afterschool and summer programs. Demand for programming in West Virginia is so great that more than 2 out of every 5 applications were 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, a 2023 report by the U.S. Department of Education on 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs nationally included findings showing that West Virginia students in the program became more engaged in learning and made both academic and behavioral gains. Based on teachers surveyed, more than 3 in 5 participants in grades 1 through 5 (61%) improved their engagement in learning and 57% of 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with an attendance rate below 90% the previous school year improved their school-day attendance. Three-quarters of participants in grades 7-8 and 10-12 who had a GPA below 3.0 the previous year improved their GPAs (75%). And more than 2 in 3 students in grades 4 through 8 demonstrated growth on the state's reading/language arts (67%) and math assessments (69%). Students in programs also demonstrated improvements in their behavior in school, with all students (100%) decreasing their in-school suspensions compared to the previous year. Additionally, a 2021 evaluation of West Virginia's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs by the West Virginia Department of Education found that students with very high levels of participation in programs saw better academic gains than students participating less regularly.

