Expanding learning and supports for an equitable recovery

This is Afterschool in Iowa

In Iowa, afterschool programs provide expanded learning opportunities to 45,629 students and are a lifeline for working families. In Iowa, 87% of parents report that all young people deserve access to quality afterschool and summer programs. Yet, too many kids in Iowa are being left out. In fact, for every child in an afterschool program, 4 more would participate if a program were available.

Helping young people learn, grow, and thrive

Students in afterschool programs in Iowa are:

- Interacting with peers and building social skills 89%
- Getting homework help 56%
- Taking part in physical activities 88%

A 2019 evaluation of Iowa’s 21st CCLC programs by the Iowa Department of Education found that among students regularly attending a 21st CCLC program and in need of improvement, 72% improved in math and 70% improved in English. Among regularly attending elementary schoolers identified as not proficient in reading, 25% achieved proficiency or higher, and among regularly attending middle and high schoolers not proficient in math, 46% achieved proficiency or above. Additionally, teachers reported that 79% of regular program participants improved their homework completion and participation in class, and 67% improved their behavior.

Parents in Iowa agree that afterschool programs:

- Provide opportunities to build life skills 81%
- Get kids excited about learning 67%
- Reduce the likelihood that youth will use drugs or engage in other risky behaviors 75%

Call and response: Afterschool programs stepping up during the pandemic

From the outset of the pandemic, afterschool programs have adapted and expanded their services to best meet the needs of the children and families they serve. To address food insecurity, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa partnered with the Food Bank of Iowa to deliver meals to families and open the Gregory & Suzie Glazer Burt Club as a food pantry. Staff also supplemented the Des Moines Public Schools’ grab-and-go meal locations.

A 2021 national survey of afterschool providers finds programs continue to provide:

- Academic enrichment 94%
- Time to interact with peers 86%
- Physical activity 81%
- Snacks or meals 77%
- Check-ins with student and families 32%
- In-person services during virtual school days* 24%

Looking toward the summer, 79% of providers will be offering summer programming.

*Among program providers that report that they are offering in-person services.
Parents in Iowa are behind public investment in afterschool programs

86% of parents favor public funding of afterschool programs to expand opportunities for kids in underserved communities.

Support is strong and bipartisan

90% Democrats 87% Independents 83% Republicans

Afterschool Alliance

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. Learn more at: www.afterschoolalliance.org