



This is Afterschool in Iowa



Afterschool Alliance

Throughout the pandemic, afterschool and summer programs adapted and expanded services to meet the needs of children and families. They are vital partners today in supporting students' well-being and academic growth. Yet, too many kids in Iowa are being left out. Prior to the pandemic, a survey of Iowa parents found that for every child in an afterschool program, **4 more would participate if a program were available**. These programs provide safe and supportive spaces to keep young people engaged in learning during a difficult and trying time. So it comes as no surprise that in a national fall 2020 survey, 75% of parents agreed that the experience of the pandemic made them appreciate teachers and afterschool providers more than ever before.







Accelerating students' learning and growth

Students in afterschool programs in Iowa are:

-  Getting homework help – **56%**
-  Interacting with their peers and building social skills – **89%**
-  Taking part in STEM learning opportunities – **66%**

Promoting healthy futures

Parents in Iowa agree that afterschool programs are helping young people to:

-  Learn life skills – **81%**
-  Be physically active – **85%**
-  Build positive relationships with caring adults and mentors – **71%**
-  Access nutritious foods – **68%**
-  Build confidence – **78%**
-  Stay safe and out of trouble – **69%**

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.

American Rescue Plan Funding Helping Increase Access to Afterschool and Summer Programs During the Pandemic




Over the past two years, an overwhelming majority of afterschool and summer program providers have been concerned about their program's long-term funding and future. Costs associated with recruiting and retaining staff, instituting new COVID-19 health and safety protocols, and adding program space to allow for social distancing are a few of the added expenses afterschool and summer programs faced through the pandemic. Funds from American Rescue Plan present a tremendous opportunity to help afterschool and summer programs support the children and families in their communities. The Des Moines School District is using a portion of their Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funds to address learning loss/unfinished learning, which includes comprehensive afterschool programs, summer learning or summer enrichment, tutoring, and more. The district released a survey to the public for feedback on how to invest federal pandemic relief funds, and afterschool and summer learning were listed as priority areas.



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Supporting working families

Parents in Iowa agree that afterschool:

-  Helps working parents keep their jobs – **79%**
-  Helps parents build connections to their child’s school day education – **57%**
-  Provides working parents peace of mind – **87%**

A smart investment

Research spanning several states shows that every \$1 invested in afterschool programs saves at least \$3 by:

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

Iowa parents want investment in afterschool and summer programs

The overwhelming majority of parents in Iowa favor public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs:

86%
favor public funding
for afterschool opportunities

87%
favor public funding for
summer learning opportunities

21st Century Community Learning Centers

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) are local before-school, afterschool, and summer learning programs that serve students attending high-poverty, low-performing schools. These 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 2021 Department of Education annual performance report of 21st CCLC found that among regular participants:

- 1 in 2** improved their language arts or math grades
- 7 in 10** improved their homework completion and class participation
- MORE THAN **3 in 5** improved their behavior in class

In Iowa, **14,648 children in 93 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 Iowa is so great that **1 out of every 8** applications were not funded during the most recent competition.

Transforming Lives

“During the pandemic, it was challenging because I was social distancing and not doing certain activities. But, my 21st Century [Community Learning Center] program has been a place where I’ve been able to meet new friends, communicate, and be social with others. I wasn’t a talker, but now I am! The mentors in my program also helped me stay on top of my work and encouraged me. Without my program, I wouldn’t have the grades I do now, and I wouldn’t be as social as I am. I wouldn’t be able to do a lot of things without my program.”

Kyla Anderson

High school student attending a 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool program



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