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 West Virginia are being left out. Prior to the pandemic, a survey of West Virginia 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 West Virginia are:
- Getting homework help – 66%
- Taking part in STEM learning opportunities – 73%
- Interacting with their peers and building social skills – 98%

Promoting healthy futures
Parents in West Virginia agree that afterschool programs are helping young people to:
- Learn life skills – 82%
- Build positive relationships with caring adults and mentors – 80%
- Be physically active – 84%
- Access nutritious foods – 78%
- Build confidence – 84%
- Stay safe and out of trouble – 76%

A 2018 evaluation of West Virginia’s 21st CCLC programs by the West Virginia Department of Education found that participants made both academic and behavioral gains. Students who attended at least 90 days of programming had a higher regular school-day attendance rate than their non-participating peers (96% vs. 93%), as well as had fewer disciplinary referrals than non-participants (0.3 vs. 0.6). Participating students were also more likely than their non-participating peers score at proficiency in math (43% vs. 34%).
Supporting working families
Parents in West Virginia agree that afterschool:

- Helps working parents keep their jobs – 77%
- Provides working parents peace of mind – 79%
- Helps parents build connections to their child’s school day education – 71%

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
- Improving kids’ performance at school
- Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency

West Virginia parents want investment in afterschool and summer programs
The overwhelming majority of parents in West Virginia favor public funding for afterschool and summer learning programs:

| 86% favor public funding for afterschool opportunities | 87% favor public funding for summer learning opportunities |

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

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 West Virginia, 7,571 children in 164 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 West Virginia is so great that 7 out of every 10 applications were not funded during the most recent competition.

Learn more at: www.afterschoolalliance.org