



This is Afterschool in Pennsylvania

In Pennsylvania, Big Spring School District dedicated approximately \$442,000 of its American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Education to provide a high-dosage summer enrichment and learning program for the 2021, 2022, and 2023 summers. Thanks to these pandemic relief funds, the district was able to extend the hours of its summer program, offer additional academic opportunities, and provide transportation to and from programming. Providing transportation helped increase access to the summer program, as finding a way to and from the program for students across the rural district was a barrier to participation in past summers.

However, as American Rescue Plan and other pandemic relief funding expires, many Pennsylvania youth will lose their programs—and families and communities will lose essential supports—if action is not taken. In Pennsylvania, 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 Pennsylvania 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

Pennsylvania students in afterschool programs are:

-  Getting homework help **(69%)**
-  Engaging in STEM learning opportunities **(77%)**
-  Working on their reading and writing skills **(59%)**
-  Interacting with their peers and building social skills **(90%)**
-  Taking part in physical activities **(85%)**
-  Building confidence **(79%)**



94% of Pennsylvania parents are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

Pennsylvania parents agree that afterschool programs are:



Helping working parents keep their jobs (**81%**)



Providing working parents peace of mind knowing that their children are safe (**83%**)

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT

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



Research has found that **EVERY \$1 INVESTED** in Pennsylvania afterschool programs leads to a **RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF APPROXIMATELY \$6.69** by:

- ✓ Reducing high school student drop out rates
- ✓ Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency
- ✓ Reducing drug and alcohol addiction and teen pregnancy

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 Pennsylvania, 32,249 children in 428 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 Pennsylvania is so great that 1 out of every 2 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, a 2023 evaluation by the Pennsylvania Department of Education found that students attending 21st CCLC programs saw academic and behavioral gains, with students regularly attending more likely to improve. Teachers reported that more than 3 in 5 students (62%) in 21st CCLC programs who needed to improve their academic performance did, and among students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 who needed to improve academically, a majority improved their GPA (56%). Approximately 1 in 5 students in 4th through 8th grade who needed to improve scored higher on their reading (22%) and math (18%) state assessments. Evaluators also reported that students attending the program more frequently were more likely to have proficient or advanced assessment levels. Based on teacher surveys, a majority of regular attendees improved completing their homework (64%), participation in class (63%), motivation to learn (55%), and attentiveness in class (53%). Nearly all students (97%) were promoted to the next grade.

