



This is Afterschool in Kansas

In rural Ford County, Kansas, Dodge City Public Schools allocated more than \$580,000 of their district’s American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds to support the Exploration in Transition Opportunities (EXITO) program. EXITO, an afterschool STEAM program serving secondary students at five schools in the district, focuses on skill-building activities, language acquisition, career exploration, and other enrichment opportunities, as well as offers homework assistance and tutoring. The program also includes field trips to places such as the Hutchinson Cosmosphere, Garden City Zoo, and college visits for high school students. The program’s goal is to support students struggling with academic and cultural adaptation in a district where of Dodge City’s secondary students, approximately 47% have a first language other than English and 78% live in families with low incomes. Additionally, ARP ESSER funds were allocated toward staff professional development, including staff attending conferences on STEAM education and how to best support migrants, English-language learners, and immigrant students, and toward encouraging family engagement, such as creating activities that helped families feel more comfortable with STEM and find ways to integrate STEM into their everyday routines.

However, as American Rescue Plan and other pandemic relief funding expires, many Kansas youth will lose their programs—and families and communities will lose essential supports—if action is not taken. In Kansas, for every child in an afterschool program, 3 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 Kansas 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

Kansas students in afterschool programs are:

-  Getting homework help (78%)
-  Engaging in STEM learning opportunities (64%)
-  Working on their reading and writing skills (68%)
-  Interacting with their peers and building social skills (98%)
-  Taking part in physical activities (85%)
-  Building confidence (82%)



96% of Kansas parents are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

Kansas parents agree that afterschool programs are:



Helping working parents keep their jobs **(82%)**



Providing working parents peace of mind knowing that their children are safe **(84%)**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT

An overwhelming majority of Kansas 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%).

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 Kansas, 11,718 children in 124 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 Kansas is so great that more than 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, in a 2023 report by the U.S. Department of Education on 21st CCLC programs nationally, Kansas students in need of improvement attending afterschool programs saw gains. A majority of Kansas 21st CCLC participants who had a GPA below 3.0 the previous year improved their average (54%), and approximately 2 in 5 students demonstrated growth on the state's reading/language arts (42%) and math (41%) assessments. Additionally, teachers reported that 70% of their students attending 21st CCLC programs improved their engagement in learning. And among students with an attendance rate below 90% the previous school year, 45% improved their school-day attendance. Kansas 21st CCLC students also saw improvements in behavior, with 60% of students experiencing a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous year. These findings are similar to a 2018 evaluation by the Kansas State Department of Education that found, based on teacher surveys, an overwhelming majority of students participating in programs improved, stayed the same, or did not need to change in the areas of attendance (98%), academics (96%), homework completion (95%), and behavior (90%).

