



This is Afterschool in Wisconsin

In Madison, Wisconsin, CEOs of Tomorrow—which works to inspire youth to unlock their entrepreneurial gifts while doing good through social entrepreneurship—was awarded \$90,500 in American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds as part of the state's ESSER III Out of School Time grant. With the funds, CEOs of Tomorrow started a new program at Southside Elementary School, where 4th and 5th graders learned how to start and run a business by creating and selling gummy bears. The program, which ran two hours Monday through Friday for eight weeks, also incorporated math and reading supports, lessons around financial wellness, physical activity, and fun activities such as scavenger hunts and an end-of-the-year pizza party. The program partnered with community organizations, including the Heartland Animal Sanctuary and Dogs on Call, an animal therapy organization, to help the students gain a better understanding of animal welfare, and a portion of the money students earned was donated back to school in the form of needed supplies such as snacks or playground equipment. Overall, CEOs of Tomorrow was able to serve 60-70 students, with students seeing an 18% and 26% increase in math testing scores during two different semesters.

However, as American Rescue Plan and other pandemic relief funding expires, many Wisconsin youth will lose their programs—and families and communities will lose essential supports—if action is not taken. In Wisconsin, for every child in an afterschool program, 2 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 Wisconsin 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

Wisconsin students in afterschool programs are:



Getting homework help (74%)



Engaging in STEM learning opportunities (67%)



Working on their reading and writing skills (65%)



Interacting with their peers and building social skills (98%)



Taking part in physical activities (87%)



Building confidence (79%)



96% of Wisconsin parents are satisfied with their child's afterschool program

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

Wisconsin 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 **(83%)**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT

An overwhelming majority of Wisconsin 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 Wisconsin, 18,168 children in 150 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 Wisconsin is so great that approximately 2 out of every 5 applications were 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 2022 evaluation of Wisconsin's 21st CCLC programs by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction found that students attending programs saw gains. Two-thirds of Wisconsin's 21st CCLC participants who had a GPA below 3.0 the previous year improved their GPA (66%), and approximately 1 in 3 demonstrated growth on the state's reading/language arts (33%) and math assessments (32%). Students in programs also demonstrated improvements in their engagement in learning and behavior in school, with teachers reporting that 65% of their students attending 21st CCLC programs improved their engagement, 63% of students with an attendance rate below 90% the previous school year improved their school-day attendance, and nearly all students (97%) decreased their in-school suspensions compared to the previous year. Dr. Jill Underly, the state superintendent, stated in the evaluation, "[21st CCLC programs] regularly provide essential services to students and families throughout Wisconsin, from academic enrichment and physical fitness to family engagement and social and emotional learning activities."

