



This is Afterschool in Alaska



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 Alaska are being left out. Prior to the pandemic, a survey of Alaska parents found that for every child in an afterschool program, **3 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 Alaska are:



Getting homework help – **69%**



Interacting with their peers and building social skills – **93%**



Taking part in STEM learning opportunities – **86%**

Promoting healthy futures

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



Learn life skills – **83%**



Be physically active – **89%**



Build positive relationships with caring adults and mentors – **81%**



Access nutritious foods – **67%**



Build confidence – **82%**



Stay safe and out of trouble – **74%**

A 2020 evaluation of Alaska's 21st CCLC programs by Education Northwest found that students who participated more regularly in programs saw greater academic and behavioral gains. Teachers surveyed reported that an overwhelming majority of students attending the programs for at least 60 days improved their academic performance (74%), class participation (73%), and class behavior (60%), as well as formed relationships with adults (73%) and worked collaboratively with peers (71%). Respondents shared that students who attended programs for more than 90 days made the most significant improvements over the year.

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. For example, to address lost instructional learning time, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is dedicating a portion of their Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funding allocation to support afterschool and summer learning programs for the district's elementary and middle school students. This assistance will include academic support, as well as activities such as athletics, day and overnight summer camps, STEM projects, transportation for students experiencing homelessness, and other opportunities around social-emotional learning where students can connect with one another. Afterschool programs were identified as an area of need in a district survey of 1,400 students, parents, staff, and community members to determine how ESSER funds would be allocated.



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Supporting working families

Parents in Alaska agree that afterschool:



Helps working parents keep their jobs – **81%**



Helps parents build connections to their child's school day education – **63%**



Provides working parents peace of mind – **86%**

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

Alaska parents want investment in afterschool and summer programs

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

88%

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 Alaska, **2,539 children in 45 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 Alaska is so great that **3 out of every 10** 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

