

This is Afterschool in Nebraska



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 Nebraska are being left out. Prior to the pandemic, a survey of Nebraska 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 Nebraska are:



Getting homework help – **52%**



Interacting with their peers and building social skills – **94%**



Taking part in STEM learning opportunities – **55%**

Promoting healthy futures

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



Learn life skills – **82%**



Be physically active – **89%**



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



Access nutritious foods – **72%**



Build confidence – **81%**



Stay safe and out of trouble – **79%**

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, Lincoln Public Schools is working on a number of comprehensive initiatives with its Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funding, including a summer program with transportation for elementary and middle school students. The summer program will work in coordination with libraries and the district's 21st Century Community Learning Center programs to enable them to provide full-day summer programs.




A 2020 evaluation of Nebraska's 21st CCLC programs by the University of Nebraska Medical Center found that participating students made significant academic and behavioral gains. Teachers surveyed shared that from fall to spring during the 2019-20 school year, approximately 3 in 4 participants grew moderately to significantly in math (75%), reading (74%), and science (74%). Additionally, majorities of students improved in homework completion and participation (65%), student behavior (61%), and getting along well with other students (56%).



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Supporting working families

Parents in Nebraska agree that afterschool:

-  Helps working parents keep their jobs – **84%**
-  Helps parents build connections to their child's school day education – **64%**
-  Provides working parents peace of mind – **89%**

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

Nebraska parents want investment in afterschool and summer programs

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

92%

favor public funding for afterschool opportunities

93%

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 Nebraska, **13,346 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.

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

