



2014 Candidate's Guide to Afterschool



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Afterschool Alliance



About the Afterschool Alliance

Mission

To engage public will to increase public and private funds at the national, state and local levels.

Background

The Afterschool Alliance is working to ensure that all children have access to affordable, quality afterschool programs. As the national voice for afterschool, the Alliance leads education and outreach efforts with the White House, Congress and other agencies. It represents the afterschool movement in debate and policy development on a broad set of issues such as:

- student learning;
- education and health;
- supports for children, families and communities;
- science and technology;
- future workforce development;
- secondary school reform;
- the arts and creativity;
- college access.

Building a strong, broad and diverse coalition of organizations and individuals to champion afterschool at a national level is an essential part of the Alliance's strategy. By mobilizing this extensive coalition, the Alliance has been successful at increasing support for federal afterschool appropriations and defeating proposals that threatened to cut funding for afterschool programs.

At a state and local level, the Afterschool Alliance supports the development of a unified, active field; its network includes more than 26,000 afterschool program partners. To support local programs, the Afterschool Alliance provides:

- communications, media and advocacy training;
- funding resources and advice;
- opportunities for grassroots advocates to become involved in the national afterschool movement and to showcase their work on a national platform.

Finally, at a community level, the Alliance strives to create an environment where every parent and community member expects and demands quality, affordable afterschool program.

Key Initiatives

- **Lights On Afterschool**
More than 1 million Americans rally annually to highlight the importance of afterschool to children, families and communities.
- **Afterschool for All Challenge**
More than 700 afterschool supporters convene annually in the nation's capital for networking, training, Congressional meetings and an award ceremony.
- **Afterschool Ambassador Program**
Each year, 17-20 afterschool leaders from across the country are selected from key Congressional districts to build support at a local level.
- **Afterschool Congressional Caucus**
The Alliance helped launch the first ever House and Senate Congressional Afterschool Caucuses, which include 122 bipartisan members focused on building support for afterschool.
- **Afterschool for All Campaign**
National online grassroots petition with over 24,000 signers in support of the goal of afterschool for all children.
- **State/Field Technical Assistance**
The Alliance provides technical assistance to 42 state afterschool networks, online tools and resources that attract 287,000 views and in-person trainings that attract 12,000 afterschool stakeholders annually.
- **Grassroots Networking**
Afterschool Alliance publications reach more than 65,000 interested individuals every month.
- **Research**
The Alliance's series of briefing papers, issue briefs, reports and fact sheets are used widely by media, policy makers, concerned organizations and individuals.





Overview & Table of Contents

Afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and improve academic achievement. They help build safer, stronger and smarter children and communities. Widespread, bipartisan agreement among voters and policy makers show that Americans recognize the benefits of afterschool programs.

This guide serves as a primer on afterschool as a political issue, including facts, quotes, polling information and research showing the strong support for afterschool around the nation.

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Afterschool: An Issue for Voters

Afterschool is an issue you should be talking about.

Voters understand that high quality afterschool and summer learning programs are important. When told that research shows that high quality afterschool programs can lead to increased attendance, improved behavior and improved grades, among children who regularly attend afterschool programs, 89 percent say afterschool programs are important. Connecting the benefits of afterschool investments to other campaign issues is an excellent way to forge strong coalitions of advocates and voters.

*89 % of voters say
afterschool programs
are important.*

Economy

- Without proper supervision for their children during the afterschool hours, many parents cannot work or become less productive in their jobs. This added stress can cost businesses between \$50 billion and \$300 billion annually in lost productivity.

Safety

- Afterschool programs offer access to caring adults for youth who would otherwise be home alone and unsupervised.
- Afterschool programs provide gang and drug prevention initiatives as well as access to mentors.

Crime Prevention

- Every taxpayer dollar invested in afterschool programs saves \$3 on future law enforcement and social services expenses.

Workforce Preparation

- Students in afterschool programs are proven to have improved academic performance. Principals and administrators cite afterschool programs as a strategy to help turn around failing schools.
- Afterschool programs can expose students to new academic and professional opportunities, and is a proven strategy for preparing students to be competitive in the 21st century job market.



Afterschool Facts

The Afterschool Hours in America

- More than 15 million school-age children (26 percent) are on their own after school. Of them, more than 1 million are in grades K to 5. (Afterschool Alliance, 2009)
- More than 27 million parents of school-age children are employed, including 23 million who work full time. (U.S. Department of Labor, 2014)
- Only 8.4 million K-12 children (15 percent) participate in afterschool programs. An additional 18.5 million would participate if a quality program were available in their community. (Afterschool Alliance, 2009)
- The hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex. (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2002)
- Approximately three-quarters of Americans (74 percent) agree that Members of Congress as well as state and local elected officials should increase funding for afterschool programs. (Afterschool Alliance & Lake Research Partners., 2012)
- Currently, the federal government contributes only 11 percent of the cost of afterschool, while 29 percent of children in afterschool meet the federal government's definition of low-income and in need of federal assistance. (Afterschool Alliance, 2009)

3 out of 4 Americans agree that elected officials should increase funding for afterschool programs.

Afterschool Programs Benefit Youth, Families & Communities

- Teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes than teens who do participate. They are also three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs, and are more likely to drink, smoke and engage in sexual activity. (YMCA of the USA, March 2001)
- Early childhood education expert James Heckman concludes that a complement of early education and participation in afterschool programs can reduce initiating drug use among youth by nearly 50 percent (45.8) while reducing the likelihood of them skipping school by half. (Investing in Our Young People, University of Chicago, 2006)

Afterschool Programs Benefit Youth, Families & Communities *(cont.)*

- An analysis of 73 afterschool studies concluded that afterschool programs using evidence-based approaches were consistently successful in producing multiple benefits for youth, including improvements in children's personal, social and academic skills as well as their self-esteem. (The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2007)
- Children in LA's BEST afterschool program attend school more often and report higher aspirations for finishing school and going to college. LA's BEST participants are 20 percent less likely to drop out and are 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities. Researchers estimate that every dollar invested in the LA's BEST program saves the city \$2.50 in crime-related costs. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, June 2000, Dec. 2005 and Sept. 2007)
- The Promising Afterschool Programs Study found that regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs is linked to significant gains in standardized test scores and work habits as well as reductions in behavior problems among disadvantaged students. (University of California at Irvine, 2007)
- Parents miss an average of eight days of work per year due to a lack of afterschool care. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about afterschool care costs businesses up to \$300 billion per year. (Community, Families and Work Program at Brandeis University, 2004; Catalyst & Brandeis University, Dec. 2006)
- Students in programs supported by The After-School Corporation improved their math scores and regular school day attendance compared to non-participants. High school participants passed more Regents exams and earned more high school credits than non-participants. (Policy Studies Associates, July 2004)
- Participants in Citizen Schools' afterschool programs are much more likely to go on to high-quality high schools compared to non-participants (59 percent vs. 28 percent). Former Citizen Schools participants were also significantly more likely to graduate from high school in four years when compared to Boston Public Schools students overall. (Policy Studies Associates, July 2009)

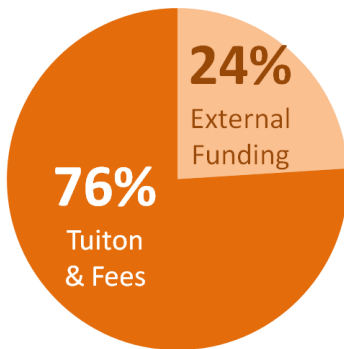


Afterschool Funding

Despite all we know about the benefits of afterschool programs, most children are missing out. Meeting the need for quality afterschool programs will take a commitment from more than a single funder, funding stream or even sector. It will require significant public investment and systems change at every level—local, state and federal. The Roadmap to Afterschool for All study was designed specifically to inform that progress and to be a catalyst for increased investment at all levels. Here are the key findings:

We have an afterschool system for those who can afford to pay that leaves those who cannot with few, if any, options.

Who is paying for afterschool?



- Parents are paying the majority of the afterschool bill. On average, parents pay more than three-quarters (76 percent) of the cost of afterschool through tuition and fees.
 - Even in low-income communities, parents pay more than half (54 percent) of the total afterschool budget.
 - On average, families pay \$2,400 per year per child for afterschool programs.
 - Low-income families are paying an average of \$1,722 per year per child.

- On average, the cost per child is \$3,190, which is consistent with other recent research on costs.
- Funding of all types is insufficient—nearly one-third (32 percent) of programs reported that their expenses exceeded their revenues.

- Currently the federal government contributes only 11 percent of the cost of afterschool, while 29 percent of the children in afterschool meet the federal government's definition of low-income and in need of federal assistance.

\$3,190
Average annual
program cost per child

Previous research revealed that cost is a top factor for families selecting an afterschool program, second only to whether or not the child enjoys the program. The Roadmap finds that longstanding programs are more likely to charge parent fees and less likely to serve low-income children. Combined, these data tell us what we have now is an afterschool system for those who can afford to pay that leaves those who cannot with few, if any, options to help keep their kids safe and give them opportunities to learn after the school day ends.



How can we relieve the financial burden on families?

We need a strategy that establishes concrete objectives for achieving, in the not too distant future, afterschool for all students. This strategy must:

- Account for the economic reality that some parents are unable to afford fees, while others can;
- Recognize the important role of diverse funding sources—government at all levels, philanthropic support, businesses and parent fees;
- Account for a broad range of programs from a variety of sponsors, reflecting the rich diversity of American communities;
- Focus on approaches that sustain successful quality programs, while allowing innovative new programs to develop.

Afterschool Programs Are Cost-Effective

As cities and states implement afterschool programs, they have discovered that not only do programs produce strong results for children, youth and communities, but they also prove to be a smart investment.

- Afterschool programs save taxpayer dollars:
 - Every dollar invested in afterschool programs will save taxpayers approximately \$3, according to a study by the Rose Institute at Claremont McKenna College.
- Afterschool reduces dropouts, expulsion and grade repetition:
 - A 2001 evaluation of California's state afterschool program revealed that the state was likely to save \$11 million that year because fewer students would be held back in school.
- Afterschool reduces truancy and juvenile crime:
 - Children attending LA's BEST afterschool program are 30 percent less likely to participate in criminal activities than their peers who do not attend the program. Researchers estimate that every dollar invested in the LA's BEST program saves the city \$2.50 in crime-related costs. (UCLA National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, September 2007)

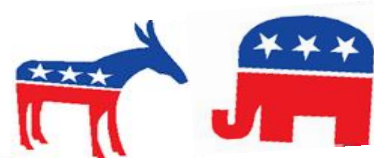
*Every dollar invested in
afterschool programs
will save taxpayers
approximately \$3.*



Voters Want Greater Investment in Afterschool Programs

Voters want their elected officials to invest more in afterschool programs, and are willing to devote taxpayer money to pay for these programs.

- Nearly 8 in 10 voters (79 percent) want their newly elected federal, state and local leaders to fund afterschool programs. (2012)
- Three in four voters (74 percent) say newly-elected officials in Congress, as well as new state and local leaders, should **increase** funding for afterschool programs. (2012)



- Ninety-four percent of Democrats, 83 percent of Independents and 71 percent of Republicans agree that there is a need for an organized activity or a safe place for children/teens, as do 73 percent of conservatives.
- Voters strongly agree that afterschool programs play a key role in building interest and skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). 86 percent of voters agree—and 70 percent strongly agree—that afterschool programs are playing a key role building interest in STEM and STEM skills. (2012)

Afterschool is a bipartisan issue. The majority of voters agree that there a need for an organized activity or safe place for children/teens after school hours.

94% of Democrats

71% of Republicans

83% of Independents

73% of Conservatives

- Parents who are concerned about their children's care after school miss an average of eight extra work days per year, which costs employers between \$496 and \$1,984 per employee per year. When parents were able to enroll their children in afterschool programs, 80 percent said they were less worried about their child's safety.

(Source: Afterschool Alliance Poll conducted by Lake Research Partners, November 2012; Afterschool Alliance Poll conducted by Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates, Inc., November 2008)



Demand for Afterschool Programs by State

In survey after survey, parents and youth across the country have overwhelmingly indicated that they would become involved in an afterschool program if one were available to them. However, far too often in far too many communities, there are not enough programs to meet this demand. Using the *America After 3PM* survey, conducted in 2009, the chart below illustrates how many children in each state are unsupervised and would participate in afterschool programs if one were available in their community. To view the complete *America After 3PM* report, visit: www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM.cfm



Demand for Afterschool Programs by State

State	Total School-Aged Children	# of Children Unsupervised After School Hours	% of Children Unsupervised After School Hours	% of Children Not in Afterschool Who Would Likely Participate
United States	57,319,000	15,074,897	26	38
Alabama	804,245	217,950	27	36
Alaska	136,480	54,728	40	35
Arizona	1,132,541	252,557	22	34
Arkansas	486,478	125,025	26	44
California	6,831,025	1,653,108	24	36
Colorado	804,244	251,728	31	40
Connecticut	622,445	172,417	28	33
Delaware	143,804	45,011	31	31
District of Columbia	82,456	-----	-----	-----
Florida	2,923,440	742,554	25	36
Georgia	1,670,846	412,699	25	32
Hawaii	209,343	68,665	33	39
Idaho	269,263	78,625	29	31
Illinois	2,284,610	641,975	28	44
Indiana	1,123,792	332,642	30	36
Iowa	518,951	166,583	32	35
Kansas	487,325	168,614	35	31
Kentucky	700,099	196,028	28	29
Louisiana	748,919	173,749	23	52
Maine	210,326	69,408	33	37
Maryland	967,404	270,873	28	37
Massachusetts	1,102,796	274,176	26	36
Michigan	1,814,472	562,486	31	35
Minnesota	911,314	294,354	32	33
Mississippi	522,788	130,697	25	57
Missouri	1,007,223	318,282	32	32
Montana	153,331	61,486	40	31
Nebraska	316,778	114,040	36	33
Nevada	427,929	121,960	28	38
New Hampshire	224,877	----	----	32
New Jersey	1,485,297	421,824	28	35
New Mexico	340,109	75,844	22	40
New York	3,068,034	779,281	25	46
North Carolina	1,498,950	472,169	31	36
North Dakota	103,268	40,584	39	25
Ohio	2,015,421	608,657	30	30
Oklahoma	624,770	180,559	29	41
Oregon	593,466	184,568	31	37
Pennsylvania	2,083,250	552,061	26	32
Rhode Island	175,902	48,021	27	38
South Carolina	729,331	177,227	24	46
South Dakota	131,284	48,969	37	32



Demand for Afterschool Programs by State (cont.)

State	Total School-Aged Children	# of Children Unsupervised After School Hours	% of Children Unsupervised After School Hours	% of Children Not in Afterschool Who Would Likely Participate
United States	57,319,000	15,074,897	26	38
Tennessee	1,014,849	297,351	29	36
Texas	4,526,595	1,167,862	26	51
Utah	520,526	146,788	28	35
Vermont	101,706	41,394	41	26
Virginia	1,292,883	311,585	24	34
Washington	1,099,167	336,345	31	27
West Virginia	285,212	59,609	21	30
Wisconsin	963,614	317,993	33	31
Wyoming	85,582	32,350	38	28



Comparison of 21st CCLC Funding Levels and Kids in Afterschool by State

Across the nation, the number of students benefitting from the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) initiative falls far below the demand for afterschool due to insufficient funding. No Child Left Behind laid out a vision for funding afterschool via the 21st CCLC initiative, but funding levels have not reached even half of the 2007 NCLB authorization level. The chart below details, by state, the vision for funding 21st CCLC under NCLB and compares it to both the FY2013 and FY2014 funding levels.

	FY12 Funding Level -- \$1.152 billion		FY13 Funding Level Due to Sequestration: - 5.2%**			FY2014 Funding Level – Omnibus Bill		
	State Allocation	Children Served*	State Allocation	Children Served	Change in Children Served	State Allocation	Children Served	Change in Children Served***
Alabama	\$17,468,930	17,469	\$17,124,732	17,125	-344	\$17,303,746	17,304	179
Alaska	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Arizona	\$24,263,401	24,263	\$21,780,546	21,781	-2,483	\$25,045,451	25,045	3,265
Arkansas	\$11,947,035	11,947	\$11,069,300	11,069	-878	\$11,456,895	11,457	388
California	\$124,410,564	124,411	\$122,135,443	122,135	-2,275	\$124,945,207	124,945	2,810
Colorado	\$11,748,526	11,749	\$10,691,925	10,692	-1,057	\$11,325,298	11,325	633
Connecticut	\$8,043,245	8,043	\$7,629,832	7,630	-413	\$9,115,071	9,115	1,485
Delaware	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
National Total	\$1,151,673,216	1,151,673	\$1,091,564,185	1,091,564	-60,109	\$1,149,730,000	1,149,370	57,806

*Numbers of children served are based on cost of \$1000 per child.

**The FY2013 level is the funding appropriated after a 5.2% cut due to sequestration.

*** Compared to number of children served at FY13 funding levels



Comparison of 21st CCLC Funding Levels and Kids in Afterschool by State (cont.)

	FY12 Funding Level -- \$1.152 billion		FY13 Funding Level Due to Sequestration: - 5.2%**			FY2014 Funding Level – Omnibus Bill		
	State Allocation	Children Served*	State Allocation	Children Served	Change in Children Served	State Allocation	Children Served	Change in Children Served***
District of Columbia	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Florida	\$58,215,163	58,215	\$55,434,244	55,434	-2,781	\$59,746,430	59,746	4,312
Georgia	\$40,470,030	40,470	\$36,114,920	36,115	-4,355	\$38,386,931	38,387	2,272
Hawaii	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Idaho	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Illinois	\$50,432,611	50,433	\$47,223,834	47,224	-3,209	\$52,083,803	52,084	4,860
Indiana	\$19,542,662	19,543	\$19,282,982	19,283	-260	\$20,038,011	20,038	755
Iowa	\$5,972,266	5,972	\$6,320,633	6,321	348	\$7,033,231	7,033	713
Kansas	\$8,671,350	8,671	\$7,763,028	7,763	-908	\$7,774,563	7,775	12
Kentucky	\$17,401,707	17,402	\$15,890,523	15,891	-1,511	\$17,054,767	17,055	1,164
Louisiana	\$21,498,940	21,499	\$20,337,754	20,338	-1,161	\$22,386,433	22,386	2,049
Maine	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Maryland	\$14,301,143	14,301	\$14,412,093	14,412	111	\$15,545,757	15,546	1,134
Massachusetts	\$16,526,994	16,527	\$15,123,391	15,123	-1,404	\$16,842,718	16,843	1,719
Michigan	\$41,395,115	41,395	\$37,308,102	37,308	-4,087	\$39,049,339	39,049	1,741
Minnesota	\$12,472,566	12,473	\$11,589,378	11,589	-883	\$11,646,576	11,647	57
Mississippi	\$14,472,436	14,472	\$13,074,566	13,075	-1,398	\$13,258,754	13,259	184
Missouri	\$19,038,485	19,038	\$16,226,749	16,227	-2,812	\$17,648,852	17,649	1,422
Montana	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Nebraska	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Nevada	\$7,664,387	7,664	\$8,116,893	8,117	453	\$8,788,740	8,789	672
New Hampshire	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
New Jersey	\$22,859,685	22,860	\$22,101,467	22,101	-758	\$22,245,615	22,246	144
New Mexico	\$8,752,954	8,753	\$8,752,730	8,753	0	\$8,812,990	8,813	60
New York	\$87,582,671	87,583	\$79,308,012	79,308	-8,275	\$84,544,765	84,545	5,237
North Carolina	\$30,464,412	30,464	\$30,138,414	30,138	-326	\$31,709,381	31,709	1,571
North Dakota	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Ohio	\$44,681,477	44,681	\$42,981,284	42,981	-1,700	\$45,173,387	45,173	2,192
Oklahoma	\$11,895,420	11,895	\$11,780,384	11,780	-115	\$11,603,611	11,604	-177
Oregon	\$11,499,285	11,499	\$10,817,454	10,817	-682	\$12,225,613	12,226	1,408
Pennsylvania	\$41,255,903	41,256	\$42,432,809	42,433	1,177	\$42,806,263	42,806	373
Puerto Rico	\$38,872,543	38,873	\$30,358,067	30,358	-8,514	\$30,763,435	30,763	405
Rhode Island	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
South Carolina	\$17,229,877	17,230	\$15,658,076	15,658	-1,572	\$16,916,187	16,916	1,258
South Dakota	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
National Total	\$1,151,673,216	1,151,673	\$1,091,564,185	1,091,564	-60,109	\$1,149,730,000	1,149,370	57,806

*Numbers of children served are based on cost of \$1000 per child.

** The FY2013 level is the funding appropriated after a 5.2% cut due to sequestration.

***Compared to number of children served at FY13 funding levels



Comparison of 21st CCLC Funding Levels and Kids in Afterschool by State (cont.)

	FY11 Funding Level -- \$1.154 billion		FY12 Funding Level -- 1.151 billion**			FY2014 Funding Level – Omnibus Bill		
	State Allocation	Children Served*	State Allocation	Children Served	Change in Children Served	State Allocation	Children Served	Change to Children
Tennessee	\$21,225,227	21,225	\$21,003,849	21,004	-221	\$21,786,041	21,786	782
Texas	\$104,720,509	104,721	\$101,583,903	101,584	-3,137	\$106,206,775	106,207	4,623
Utah	\$6,304,873	6,305	\$7,061,349	7,061	756	\$7,192,163	7,192	131
Vermont	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
Virginia	\$18,891,425	18,891	\$16,344,523	16,345	-2,547	\$17,822,835	17,823	1,478
Washington	\$16,548,609	16,549	\$15,586,591	15,587	-962	\$16,745,030	16,745	1,158
West Virginia	\$7,117,394	7,117	\$7,061,414	7,061	-56	\$7,450,744	7,451	389
Wisconsin	\$16,593,686	16,594	\$17,230,399	17,230	637	\$17,054,410	17,054	-176
Wyoming	\$5,658,352	5,658	\$5,348,665	5,349	-310	\$5,631,913	5,632	283
National Total	\$1,151,673,216	1,151,673	\$1,091,564,185	1,091,564	-60,109	\$1,149,730,000	1,149,370	57,806
*Numbers of children served are based on cost of \$1000 per child.								
**The FY2013 level is the funding appropriated after a 5.2% cut due to sequestration.								
***Compared to number of children served at FY13 funding levels								



STEM in Afterschool: The Key to Economic Success in the 21st Century

- Students in the United States are not being adequately or equitably prepared to enter a globalized workforce that requires significant proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and math.
 - 29 countries outperformed the U.S. in mathematics and 22 countries outperformed the U.S. in science, as measured by the 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).
 - 73 percent of Americans believe the federal government should place more emphasis on increasing the number of young Americans who pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. (National Public Opinion Poll, October 2011, JZ Analytics for Research!America)





STEM in Afterschool: The Key to Economic Success in the 21st Century

According to the Labor Department, considerable mathematics and science preparation will be required in order to successfully compete for a job in 15 of the 20 projected fastest-growing occupations in 2014.

Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)-related occupations are growing at nearly twice the rate of non-STEM occupations and the unemployment rate in these fields is half that in other non-STEM fields. Workers with science and engineering degrees also tend to earn more than comparable workers.



*STEM-related occupations are growing at nearly **twice** the rate of non-STEM occupations.*

For all these reasons and more, United States must prepare its citizens to be part of an agile and adaptable workforce, capable of performing the jobs of the future and contributing to our society as citizens. We need to make sure every child in this generation develops the skills needed for the modern information age. If we fail to act with this goal in mind, our economy and our communities will suffer as we struggle to fill the needs of the future. In addition, to ensure that every child has a fair chance to reach their potential and contribute to society, we need to make sure that no matter where children live, they have an opportunity to access quality learning environments both in and out of school.,

Currently, our students are not being prepared adequately to participate the highly technical global workplace:

- Only 26 percent of 12th grade students participating in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reached or exceeded the proficient level in math (2013).
- Just 34 percent of eighth-graders performed at or above the proficient level in science (2011).
- The academic proficiency for African-American and Hispanic students continue to lag behind that of white students. 63 percent of African American students and 52 percent of Hispanic students were below the basic level of proficiency compared to 20 percent of white students in the 2011 NAEP science test.

African Americans, Hispanics, and women are also woefully under-represented in the STEM fields, especially in the physical sciences and computer and information technology careers.



STEM in Afterschool: The Key to Economic Success in the 21st Century

Schools can't tackle this problem by themselves—**students spend less than 20 percent of their waking hours in a classroom**. Out-of-school-time programs such as afterschool programs are proving to be increasingly crucial partners in STEM education improvement efforts. They are well positioned to spark an interest and engage students in STEM fields through hands-on projects that motivate learning and show why these fields are relevant to their lives and society. Additionally, ethnic minority children are more likely than others to be in afterschool programs, and show significant improvements in their attitude and ability in STEM topics after participation, making such programs a good way to help increase representation of minorities in STEM fields.

There is now strong evidence that developing a sense of identity with the STEM enterprise may be the most crucial element for students engaging and then persisting in these fields. Developing a STEM identity comes about by getting young people interested in STEM fields and professions; becoming competent and gaining confidence in their abilities to apply their knowledge and envisioning themselves as contributors and participants in this enterprise. Data from evaluation of afterschool STEM programs shows that such programs play a very strong role in this effort.

A recent report examined the impact of afterschool STEM programs and found that such programs successfully engaged and retained large numbers of students from diverse populations; young people in these programs came to express curiosity and interest in STEM subjects in ways that extended that interest both in school and out-of-school; and they gained real STEM skills and abilities as well as learned STEM-relevant life and career skills such as working in teams and collaborating effectively. Equally importantly they came to see how STEM connects to their everyday lives and can help to solve local and global problems and became much more aware of career options in STEM fields. Finally, the afterschool STEM programs also had an impact on the students' academic performance in school.

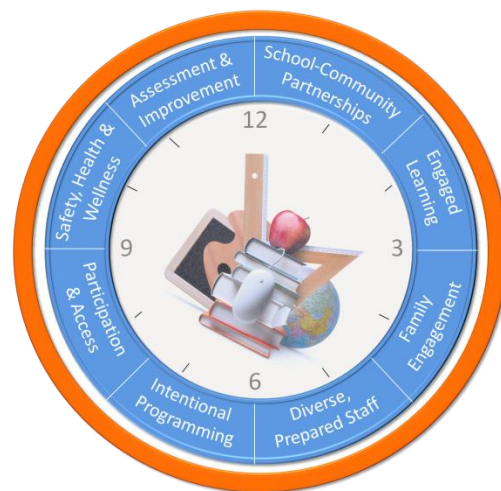
For all these reasons, it is vitally important that we provide much-needed “charging stations” in a variety of settings that power up kids' STEM learning. Some students are in charging systems with lots of opportunities to charge up STEM learning, such as access to great libraries, museums, science centers and afterschool programs. But other students are in charging dead zones—places where there just aren't many high-quality learning opportunities to plug into. When we look out across the current system, we can see that it's patchy — it's built in a way that provides fewer charging opportunities for some of our nation's children than for others. This is especially true of STEM learning, where effective learning requires multiple opportunities and ways to interact with content and charge up learning. Afterschool STEM programs can meet this need for an effective charging system across the country so that all students, no matter where they are, have high-quality opportunities to engage with STEM subjects and charge up their learning.



Expanded Learning Time (ELT) and Afterschool Programs

Among the models of expanded learning, extending the school day has gained traction as an education reform policy. Known as extended day or expanded learning time (ELT), the concept is included in the Blueprint for Reform—the Department of Education’s proposed framework for the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA)—and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waivers available to states. ELT is one model of expanded learning, along with afterschool and summer learning programs, although ELT is still in the pilot phase of development.

Studies show that your constituents want their kids to have more time for engaging and enriching educational activities. There is a difference, however, between additional time and *quality* additional time. The goal of innovation in education is one we can all agree with, but any move toward lengthening the school day should incorporate the evidence-based practices of afterschool and should be viewed as a component of school reform and funded through school reform dollars.



Elected officials should grow the resources for all models of expanding learning by helping direct school reform dollars to both afterschool and ELT—not pit one approach against the other.

Federal funding sources such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative, therefore, are essential to help states and local communities establish support systems that make afterschool programs and the extra learning time they provide meet your constituency’s needs. In addition, elected officials at federal, state and local levels should grow the resources for all models of expanding learning by helping direct school reform dollars to both afterschool and ELT—not pit one approach against the other.

Research documenting the outcomes of quality programs reveals a core set of key principles essential to gaining the best results from expanded learning programs. These eight principles of effective expanded learning programs apply to afterschool, before-school, summer learning and extended day or ELT programs.

1. **School-Community Partnerships:** Strong partnerships between community organizations and schools are at the core of successful expanded learning programs. These partnerships should be characterized by an alignment of goals and services, effective lines of communication, and data- and resource-sharing.

Expanded Learning Time (ELT) and Afterschool Programs (cont.)

2. **Engaged Learning:** Expanded learning programs engage young people because they make learning meaningful and relevant. Activities tap in to a young person's interests, sparking their imagination and igniting a fire within. They engage young people initially by providing choice and voice over what is offered, and maintain engagement through positive relationships with adults and peers.
3. **Family Engagement:** A wide body of research points to active parent involvement in their child's education as a key factor in student success; community-based organizations, partnering with schools on expanded learning, can often help facilitate that involvement. Expanded learning programs that provide safe environments for children to learn, offer parental choice and facilitate communication are crucial to parents, schools and most of all students.
4. **Intentional Programming:** Explicit goals and intentionally designed activities that align with those goals are critical to the success of expanded learning programs. In addition, successful programs must also engage participants in meaningful ways and meet their developmental and academic needs.
5. **Diverse, Prepared Staff:** Successful expanded learning programs ensure that the staffing ratios, qualifications, ongoing professional development and overall diversity of staff are closely linked to program goals and activities. In most instances, staffing involves a combination of both in-school staff and community partners.
6. **Participation & Access:** Studies show that frequency and duration of participation matter; the more kids participate, the more likely they are to show academic gains. However, participation should not be mandatory; when children choose and direct their enrichment experiences, they become more ardent learners and stronger leaders.
7. **Safety, Health & Wellness:** Adequate space, supervision and security are necessary for young people to have the comfort and freedom to focus solely on the task at hand. In addition, the best programs provide opportunities for exercise and access to nutritious meals that otherwise might be unavailable.
8. **Ongoing Assessment & Improvement:** Programs that employ data sound collection and management practices focused on continuous improvement have the most success in establishing and maintaining quality services. Frequent assessment (both informal and formal) and regular evaluation (both internal and external) are ingredients needed to refine and sustain expanded learning programs.

When children choose and direct their own learning experiences, they become more ardent learners and stronger leaders.

For more information on the Afterschool Alliance, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private and nonprofit entities dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth have access to quality and affordable afterschool programs. The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the C.S. Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, JCPenney Afterschool Fund, Open Society Foundations, The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation.