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Q&A on Afterschool and the Common Core

Forty-five states have adopted the [Common Core State Standards](#) in both English Language Arts and Math, with the majority of these states expected to implement the standards by the 2013-2014 school year. As more schools begin to implement the Common Core standards, afterschool programs are well-positioned to support the learning that takes place during the school day and to align afterschool programming so that it bolsters students' academic growth and engagement in learning.

The Afterschool Alliance recently released an [Issue Brief](#) describing how afterschool programs are an ideal partner for schools and teachers in their work with the Common Core standards.

Below is a short Q&A on the intersection of afterschool programs and the Common Core standards.

How can afterschool learning contribute to student achievement under the Common Core standards?

- ✓ Across the country, afterschool programs are helping students develop the critical thinking, problem-solving and communications skills that the Common Core emphasizes.
- ✓ Afterschool programs create engaging, fun, thoughtful and relevant learning experiences for children, allowing them the opportunity to produce and create, delve deeper into projects, collaborate with their peers, and focus on the learning that takes place throughout projects, rather than solely on the end result.
- ✓ Working in partnership with schools and teachers, afterschool programs hold infinite potential to prepare children for college and the workforce, and have the competencies necessary to be successful, productive and engaged citizens.

What are some examples?

- ✓ Statewide afterschool networks like the Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance and the New York State Afterschool Network, are playing a lead role in reaching out to schools and teachers to find ways to align afterschool programming with the school day.
- ✓ Afterschool programs like the L.A.C.E.R. (Literacy, Arts, Culture, Education and Recreation) Afterschool Program in Hollywood, Calif., are focusing on high-need students and giving additional attention to those who struggle with school-day lessons.
- ✓ Raising Expectations in Atlanta offers customized lessons and individual attention to students during out-of-school-time hours.
- ✓ The Baltimore Urban Debate League Middle School Competitive Debate Program (BUDL) uses the challenge of competition and debate to build Common Core skills.

- ✓ Bridge the Gap College Prep’s Afterschool Extended Learning Day Program (BTGCP) in Marin City, Calif. focuses on supporting students’ socio-emotional development and ties lessons to students’ personal interests.
- ✓ Some afterschool programs, like the Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program (CPEP) in Middletown, Ct., are getting ahead of the curve and preparing students for Next Generation Science Standards.

Why does the Common Core discussion need more focus on afterschool?

- ✓ The Common Core is a frequent topic in discussions among educators, policymakers and the media, but afterschool programs’ vital role in furthering Common Core objectives has not been fully appreciated.
- ✓ These programs foster academic and socio-emotional support for children and have much to offer students, teachers and families as the Common Core enters classrooms around the United States.
- ✓ Afterschool and summer learning programs have long valued a learning environment that reflects many of the themes emphasized by the Common Core, such as active learning, collaborative environments, projects that promote perseverance, and creative and critical thinking.
- ✓ Collaboration between schools and afterschool and summer programs will complement learning under the Common Core and can help prepare children for the future and to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

The complete Issue Brief—*Afterschool and the Common Core State Standards*—with additional details on local programs and research is available [here](#). A [one-page summary](#), [blog post](#) and an [archived webinar](#), featuring a mix of teachers and afterschool leaders currently working to integrate Common Core within programs discussing how afterschool programs are supporting learning around these standards, with additional information are available online.

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Note: For additional information or to set up an interview with an Afterschool Alliance expert, contact Luci Manning at 202/371-1999 or luci@prsolutionsdc.com.

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

The Afterschool Alliance’s Issue Brief [series](#) examines the role of afterschool programs in addressing a variety of contemporary issues facing youth, schools and communities.