

Afterschool fostering student success the Nebraska way



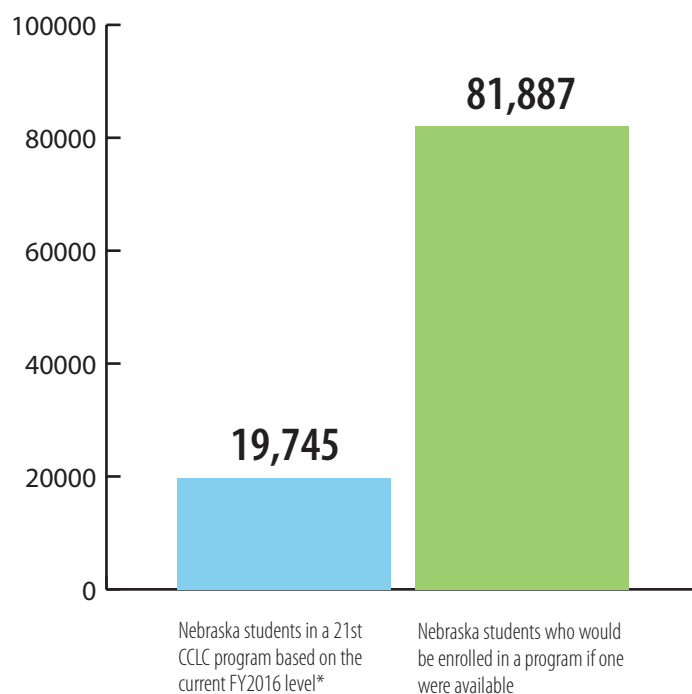
Beyond School Bells
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In Nebraska, afterschool programs are keeping students safe, inspiring them to learn and supporting Nebraska's working families. Yet 71,983 school-age children (22 percent) in Nebraska are alone and unsupervised during the hours after school. More than a decade of research confirms that quality afterschool programs are providing rich learning experiences for students, helping to narrow existing opportunity and achievement gaps, and positioning students toward a bright future as they move through school, career and life.

The challenge.

The need for afterschool programs far exceeds the funding available in Nebraska:

In Nebraska, the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) initiative is the only federal funding source dedicated exclusively to before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs. Investments in 21st CCLC programs are keeping children in high-poverty, low-performing schools safe and supported; engaging them in interest-driven, academically enriching activities; and providing peace of mind to working families. However, the number of Nebraska students who would be enrolled in an afterschool program if one were available to them far outweighs the number of students who attend a 21st CCLC program, due in large part to limited federal funding for programs.



The need for afterschool in Nebraska:

81,887 students in Nebraska would participate in an afterschool program if one were available to them (31%).

71,983 students are on their own during the hours after school in Nebraska (22%).

The Current State of Afterschool in Nebraska:

57,201 students participate in an afterschool program (18%).

19,745 students participate in a 21st CCLC funded program.

116 21st CCLC grantees are in Nebraska. 31 communities are served by a 21st CCLC program in Nebraska.

77% of Nebraska parents support public funding for afterschool programs.

An evaluation of Nebraska's 21st CCLC afterschool programs found that students made gains in their motivation to learn, academic performance and social skills. Additionally, both students and their parents had positive feedback about the programs. For instance, students highly rated feeling safe in the programs, and parents reported that they believe that the programs benefit their child. (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015)

*This figure is an Afterschool Alliance calculation based on the state-allocated 21st CCLC funding and a program cost of \$1,000 per child. The program cost per child is an Afterschool Alliance estimation based on the Department of Education's per-student expenditures for: (1) all students attending 21st CCLC programs and (2) students who regularly attend 21st CCLC programs.

Why afterschool?

Research shows that quality afterschool programs are:



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Improving engagement in school and conduct at school

A meta-analysis of 68 afterschool studies found that students in high-quality afterschool programs attended school more often and showed improvements in their behavior compared to students not enrolled in programs. Another study spanning 35 quality afterschool programs found that students regularly participating in programs saw improvements in their work habits, demonstrated higher levels of persistence and saw reductions in reports of misconduct, such as skipping school. (Weissberg, R.P., Durlak, J. and Pachan, M., 2010; Vandell, D.L., Reisner, E.R. and Pierce, K.M., 2007)



Increasing academic achievement

In addition to an evaluation of 21st CCLC programs that shows that more than one in three 21st CCLC students made gains in their math and English grades, a study of outcomes associated with participation in afterschool programs found that students regularly participating during the elementary school years narrowed the math achievement gap at grade five between students from high-income and low-income families. (Department of Education, 2015; Auger, A., Pierce, K.M. and Vandell, D.L., 2013)



Immersing students in STEM

STEM programming is becoming widespread in afterschool. In Nebraska, 64 percent of parents report that their child has STEM learning opportunities in their afterschool program and 52 percent of parents agree that afterschool programs can help children gain STEM-related interests and skills. (Afterschool Alliance, 2015)



Promoting health and wellness

A national household survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance found that 73 percent of parents in Nebraska reported that their child's afterschool program serves snacks and/or meals and 72 percent said that it offers opportunities for physical activity. (Afterschool Alliance, 2014)



Supporting working families

Researchers report that parental concerns about afterschool care cost businesses up to \$300 billion per year in decreased worker productivity. In Nebraska, 64 percent of parents surveyed agree that afterschool programs help working parents keep their jobs. (Catalyst and Brandeis University, 2006; Afterschool Alliance, 2014)



Juvenile Crime Prevention

Law enforcement officials across the nation know that the hours between the end of the school day and the end of parents work days pose the greatest risks for youth. In the short term, after-school programs keep kids safe, off the streets and away from gangs from 3 to 6 p.m., when most violent juvenile crime and victimization occurs. Over the long run, research shows after-school programs can help decrease drug use and teen pregnancy, and can increase school attendance and high school graduation rates. The link between high school dropouts and crime is direct: Dropouts are three times more likely to be arrested and eight times more likely to be incarcerated than high school graduates. (Council for a Stronger America, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2016)

Learning doesn't end when the school day does.

Our mission is to improve access to and quality of Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) by building partnerships, working toward smarter state and local policy, and increasing dialogue about afterschool and summer programs powered by school-community partnerships.