

IOWA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

# State of Afterschool and Summer Programming in Iowa

OCTOBER 2016





*\*Photos on the cover and pages 9 & 13 provided courtesy of The Iowa Children's Museum.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Iowans can do more to fully support our children, youth, and families. We know this because there are more Iowa children and youth that need or want afterschool programming at their school or within their community than are currently being served.

**86%** of Iowa's children and youth are not currently served by an afterschool program. Of those, **33%** would take advantage of an opportunity if it was available to them. That means there is unmet demand for programming for over **136,000 CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN IOWA!**

Iowa youth and communities have significant local needs:

- » Safe Places
- » Physical and Mental Health
- » Academics
- » Social and Emotional Skills
- » Workforce Skills
- » Rurality

Iowa can make an impact on these areas by investing in equal access to high quality before-school, afterschool, and summer learning opportunities.

Afterschool and summer learning programs:

- » Support working families
- » Support student success
- » Develop critical workforce skills in our young people
- » Build important skills that support good mental and physical health
- » Provide mentoring and other positive relationships
- » Allow students to explore STEM and literacy in different ways
- » Leverage community resources through partnerships
- » Return investments four-fold

What must Iowa do to ensure equal access to high quality out-of-school learning opportunities statewide?

- » Provide adequate funding for programming at schools and within the community
- » Develop professional development that is accessible statewide, especially in Iowa's rural communities
- » Ensure transportation is not a barrier to participation in programming





# LETTER FROM IAA STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

October 20, 2016

Dear Reader:

Thank you for taking time to consider this report on the State of Afterschool and Summer Programming in Iowa – 2016. We look forward to revisiting this report annually to update supporters of high quality afterschool and summer programming and influential decision makers that can help make a difference in the lives of our children and youth, although those groups are not mutually exclusive.

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) strives to ensure that all Iowa children, youth, and families have access to high quality before-school, afterschool, and summer learning opportunities in their community. This is no small task. The Afterschool Alliance estimates that 33 percent of Iowa children would participate in a program but do not have access to one near them. That is a significant missed opportunity for not only educating our young people, but developing in them key skills that help them be successful for school, career, and life.

We believe that afterschool programs can make a difference in the lives of our young people. That is why we have invested so much time and effort in bringing awareness to the needs of our communities and how they are meeting those needs through afterschool and summer programming. We also work tirelessly on a daily basis to support the profession of out-of-school time, including key work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), literacy, coordinating peer learning communities, and so much more.

We thank you for your interest in how afterschool and summer learning opportunities can support our communities, children, youth, and families. On behalf of the Iowa Afterschool Alliance Strategic Leadership Team, I encourage you to seek additional information through our website, [www.iowaafterschoolalliance.org](http://www.iowaafterschoolalliance.org), and through the Afterschool Alliance website at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).

If you are so moved, I would also encourage you to act. We are not serving all children and youth that could benefit from afterschool and summer learning. This is a fact. We need to do more to support local communities that have recognized the benefits of afterschool and summer programming, but do not have the resources to make it happen. Volunteer. Give. Do something. We need your help to ensure all Iowa children, youth, and families have the opportunity to participate in quality summer and afterschool programming.

Again, thank you for your interest. Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Jacalyn Swink  
IAA Strategic Leadership Team  
Burlington Community Schools Teacher

# INTRODUCTION

Iowans can do more to fully support our children, youth, and families. We know this because there are more Iowa children and youth that need or want afterschool programming at their school or within their community than are currently being served. This is important because we know that the hours between 3 and 6 p.m. are the riskiest for our youth (Afterschool Alliance), and by not serving them, we are missing a huge opportunity to reduce those risks and further develop academic and social skills that they can use throughout their life. This report is designed to bring awareness to this missed opportunity while showcasing the communities that are fully realizing afterschool and summer's potential.

## Purpose of This Report

This report is designed to not only raise awareness of community and youth needs in Iowa, but also to highlight how communities across the state are using afterschool and summer programming to meet those needs. Further, we strive to develop a value proposition that moves critical decision makers to act by helping local communities meet their needs in an environment of very limited resources. We think out-of-school time (before-school, afterschool, and summer programming) presents a compelling case for cost-effective investment and hope you agree by the end of this report. We believe this report will move people to act, not just sit back and believe others will do what's needed.

## Report Outline

This report is divided into three main sections: current youth and community needs or issues, how afterschool and summer programs mitigate many of these issues, and what more must be done to ensure equitable access to high quality before-school, afterschool, and summer programming. Much like the format of most of today's grant proposals, we've structured this report to state the problem or need, and then followed that statement with evidence of the impact of afterschool and summer programming. Finally, we're giving you our proposal for how to support local communities that recognize the benefit of afterschool and summer programming, but struggle to find the resources to make it happen. We hope our value proposition moves you to help in any way you can.

### What is afterschool learning?

High-quality afterschool programs serve families, children, and youth grades preK-12 to keep kids safe, help working families, and cultivate student success through intentional enrichment and academic learning opportunities before-school, afterschool, and during school breaks including summer, in schools and community- and faith-based settings. Also called: Out-of-school time, Expanded learning opportunities, Child Care, Extended Learning.

# ABOUT THE IOWA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

## Our Strategy

**Our Vision:** All Iowa children, youth, and families will have access to quality out-of-school time opportunities in their community.

**Our Mission:** Develop strong statewide systems of support for high-quality, affordable, and accessible before-school, afterschool, and summer programs.

### Guiding Principles:

- » High-quality out-of-school time (OST) programs promote academic success and social and emotional well-being through positive relationships, linkage to the school day, and parent engagement, among other strategies.
- » High-quality programs utilize diverse and mutually beneficial public-private partnerships.
- » High-quality programs tailor instruction and enrichment to make the greatest impact on youth with different learning styles and interests.
- » High-quality programs offer engaging, youth-driven and youth-led programming that inspires children and youth to learn and inquire.

### How we seek to improve access to high-quality out-of-school time programming:

**Policy and Partnerships** – Develop policies and partnerships that build capacity at the state and local levels for high-quality out-of-school time programming.

- » Monitor federal and state legislation and track bills of interest to the afterschool field.
- » Host a legislative day at the Iowa Capitol annually.
- » Connect advocates and policymakers.
- » Develop and advocate for policies that increase access to high quality afterschool programming.

**Practice Support** – Connect local providers with the resources and tools necessary to provide high-quality out-of-school time programming.

- » Showcase models of high-quality afterschool and summer programming.
- » Encourage replication of models statewide.
- » Support resource and best practice sharing among a statewide network of federal afterschool grantees.
- » Coordinate activities of two enrichment coaches in Central Iowa.
- » Disseminate a monthly e-newsletter with resources and news to a network of over 900 providers and advocates of high-quality afterschool programming.





**Outreach and Engagement** – Communicate critical data on the need and impact of out-of-school time programming to the public, partners, and other vital stakeholders.

- » Identify and engage key partners in support of high-quality afterschool programming.
- » Develop communication materials.
- » Disseminate critical messaging around the importance and impact of afterschool and summer programming.

## Network Coordination and Funding

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance is a member of the National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation. The Mott Foundation provides core operational support for the Iowa Afterschool Alliance. The Chrysalis Foundation serves as the IAA’s fiscal sponsor and has remained a critical partner since the organization’s inception in 2003. Several other funders provide programmatic support to the Iowa Afterschool Alliance, primarily the Iowa Department of Education, STEMNext, and United Way of Central Iowa. The IAA is staffed by a team from State Public Policy Group ([www.sppg.com](http://www.sppg.com)) of West Des Moines, Iowa.

### 2016 Strategic Leadership Team

*Steve Conlan, Johnston Schools and the Iowa School Age Care Alliance*

*Shea Cook, Iowa Department of Education*

*Chad Driscoll, Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service*

*Brooke Findley, The Chrysalis Foundation  
(IAA Fiscal Agent)*

*Major Darren Grimshaw, City of Burlington Police  
Department*

*Nicole Hanson, Iowa State University Extension and  
Outreach/4-H Youth Development*

*Joe Herrity, Preferred Visions*

*Vic Jaras, Iowa Department of Education*

*Representative Kevin Koester, Iowa General Assembly*

*Matt Ohman, Siouxland Human Investment Partnership,  
Sioux City*

*Ryan Page, Iowa Department of Human Services*

*Stephanie Shepard, Altoona Campus and the Iowa School  
Age Care Alliance*

*Melanie Steinhart, Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning,  
Iowa Department of Human Rights*

*Leslie Stonehocker, Child Care Resource and Referral  
of Central Iowa*

*Jacalyn Swink, Burlington Community Schools*

*Mary Lou Warner, Iowa Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs*

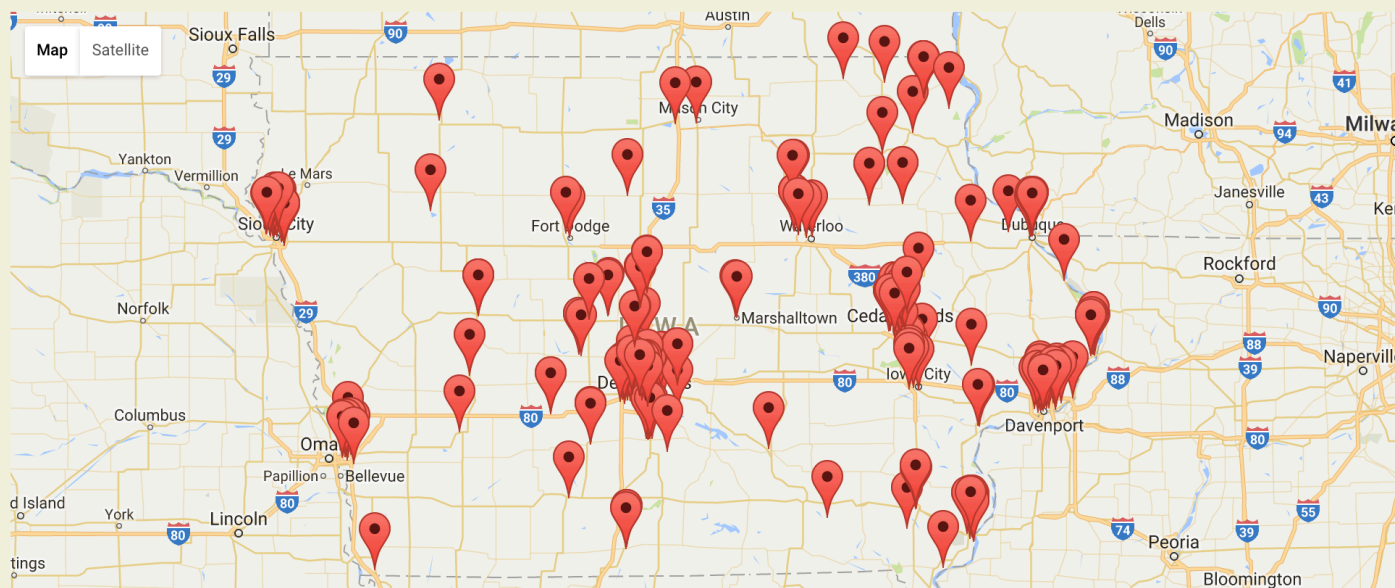
*David Welter, retired principal, Cedar Falls*

## Major Initiatives

**Welcome to the Iowa Afterschool Opportunities Statewide Directory!** This is a new service of the Iowa Afterschool Alliance that is designed to share out afterschool opportunities for children and youth in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grades in your community. Search for programming using the map provided here or submit your program [here](#).

This directory uses self-reported information. The Iowa Afterschool Alliance does not vet programs and encourages all users to seek additional information on their own regarding program quality. For a listing of state registered and licensed child care for ages 0-12, visit the [Iowa Department of Human Services website](#) or contact your regional [Child Care Resource & Referral agency](#).

Questions or issues should be sent to [iaadirectory@gmail.com](mailto:iaadirectory@gmail.com).



Search by Program or Organization Name:

### Types of Programming Offered:

- ☐ Recreation Only ☐ Homework Help ☐ Instructional Support ☐ Structured Enrichment ☐ STEM ☐ Reading & Writing (Literacy)  
☐ Career & College Preparation ☐ Arts & Music ☐ Health & Wellness

### Grades Served:

- ☐ Pre-K ☐ Kindergarten ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ 5th ☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ 9th ☐ 10th ☐ 11th ☐ 12th

## Iowa Afterschool Opportunities Directory

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance has invested in a web-based tool to collect data on afterschool programs across the state. As use of the tool grows, the information provided by the directory will be a critical resource for parents, providers, program funders, policy makers, and community partners. A searchable map is accessible at <http://iowaafterschoolalliance.org/afterschool-programs/>. Program providers create a profile and follow three easy steps to have their program listed on the map and included in aggregate statewide data on afterschool in Iowa.

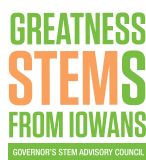
## Iowa 21st Century Community Learning Centers Network

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance coordinates resource and best practices sharing among a network of 21 federal grantees operating over 70 sites statewide. Services provided to the network under contract with the Iowa Department of Education include maintenance of a wiki site (<http://iowa21ccclc.wikispaces.com>), annual site visits to grantees, identification and sharing of best practices among grantees, coordination of grantee committees, and the coordination of an annual conference.



## Informal STEM Systems Building

Through a partnership with STEM Next, the Iowa Afterschool Alliance is working to expand the number of high-quality informal STEM learning opportunities available to Iowa's child, youth, and families by investing in informal educator professional development and a certified Dimensions of Success (<http://www.pearweb.org/tools/dos.html>) observer network. In 2015, 272 staff and volunteers were trained on quality STEM, showing a 71% improvement in program planning after the training.



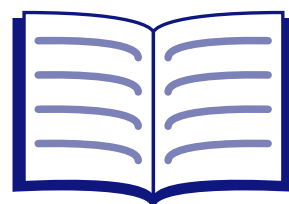
**ACTIVE LEARNING**  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
WORKING GROUP

## Central Iowa Out-of-School Time Initiative

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance coordinates the work of two enrichment coaches supporting quality improvement efforts at 13 programs in Central Iowa serving nearly 6,000 children and youth. In addition, a group of over 40 Central Iowa OST programs convenes quarterly as a network to share resources and best practices.



United Way  
of Central Iowa



OST Initiative

For more information on the Iowa Afterschool Alliance, please visit our website at [www.iowaafterschoolalliance.org](http://www.iowaafterschoolalliance.org).

# CURRENT YOUTH AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

In August and September 2016, the Iowa Afterschool Alliance went on the road to listen to communities talk about their needs and how they may or may not be meeting them with afterschool and summer learning programs. This first-hand research, coupled with national and state data, paints a picture of communities with limited resources being challenged with meeting diverse family and youth needs.

## Safe Places

Many communities visited by the Iowa Afterschool Alliance noted the basic need for safe places for youth to be when parents are working. A provider in Sioux City cited increased demand for afterschool and summer programs due to more parents working. With an employment rate of nearly 96 percent, Iowa has many parents in the workforce. It is no surprise that because of the gap between work schedules and school schedules, the hours of 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. have long been known as the riskiest time for youth due to lack of supervision or productive activities available

to youth. Add to the equation the reality of second and third shifts, and demand for programming extends well past the traditional 5:00 p.m.

*"There are a lot of working families and single families in Northeast Iowa."*

- Oelwein Listening Session Attendee



*"Crime is rising [in our community], and afterschool and summer programs provide a safe space for children and youth and can help to prevent youth from engaging in risky behaviors or being victims or perpetrators of crime."*

- Sioux City Listening Session Attendee

## Physical and Mental Health

It is truly a national shame that many of our children and youth's physical and mental health is in peril. A report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in August 2013 showed that eighteen states, including Iowa, and one U.S. territory experienced a decline in obesity rates among 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families between 2008 and 2011. Over that period, Iowa's rate fell from 15.1 percent to 14.4 percent, a statistically significant decrease according to the CDC analysis.

*"Access to healthy foods and safe places during the summer are in high demand, even for older youth."*

- Des Moines Listening Session Attendee

While Iowa has improved its childhood obesity rate, there are serious concerns about food insecurity among Iowa's low income households, especially its impacts on children's cognitive development.

According to the Food Bank of Iowa, one in eight Iowa households are food insecure, meaning these households report reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet, to the point of hunger in severe circumstances. What's more, the Food Bank of Iowa also reports that one in five Iowa children do not have enough to eat. According to the National Food Service





Management Institute of the University of Mississippi, early nutritional deficiencies in a child's diet are linked to lower cognitive ability and school achievement later in life. During the school-age years, breakfast specifically has been shown to positively impact school achievement.

Of special concern to Iowa's communities is mental health and access to mental health services. In Clinton, Iowa, a school administrator noted that changes to mental health services statewide had disproportionately impacted her community, creating issues of access for students. Across the state, communities regularly expressed concern about youth mental health.

And for good reason. A report released by the Iowa Department of Public Health says suicide is the second leading cause of death for 15 to 44 year olds in Iowa, and the third leading cause of death for 5 to 14 year olds. Iowa's suicide rate is higher than neighboring states Illinois and Wisconsin. Mental health professionals say people are usually good at detecting the warning signs of a suicidal person, but need to improve on taking action once they're noticed.

Many listening session attendees commented on community and youth issues within this area, enough to note a few here:

- » "Chronic stress in homes."
- » "Family issues [are] increasing, such as mental health and substance abuse."
- » "Youth often need chaos-free spaces when home may not be that."
- » "Basic needs are not being met in the home. We need to engage them positively."
- » "Children and youth are sharing issues related to substance abuse in the home at the afterschool program and staff is ill-equipped to help them."

## Academics

The growing achievement gap among high and low-income students continues to grow. According to the Iowa Department of Education's most recent State of Education Report (2015), students in Iowa schools eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), an indicator of low income, scored over 20 points lower than their higher income peers in fourth grade reading proficiency. Even the proficiency rate for non-FRPL students is deeply concerning: only about 85 percent of higher-income students are reading proficient in fourth grade. And while both groups are improving over previous years, the gap still exists year over year.

While math proficiency in fourth grade is slightly higher among all groups compared to reading proficiency in fourth grade, the achievement gap persists. And in both math and reading proficiency, the gap persists all the way through eleventh grade. In other words, low-income students are never able to make up the deficit established early in their schooling.

The proficiency rates and achievement gaps are even starker when looking at subgroups such as students with

*"Serving youth with special needs, especially, is difficult because of lack of options. The need is only rising."*

*- Des Moines Listening Session Attendee*





disabilities, English Language Learners, and migrants. In the case of students with disabilities, the achievement gap in fourth grade reading proficiency between them and their peers is nearly 40 percentage points lower. For migrant students, the achievement gap is just over 30 points in fourth grade reading proficiency.

## Social and Emotional Skills

Research on Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, shows many children and youth are experiencing tremendous and long-lasting impacts of these adverse experiences early in age and are presenting symptoms of long-term stress at school. Research on ACEs has found that the impacts begin early and can have far-reaching consequences on that child's life.

When a child experiences stress that is powerful, frequent, prolonged, and/or unpredictable without adequate adult support, that child's stress-response system remains on at all times. This high level of stress can disrupt the development of the brain and other organs, and increase the risk for poor health, learning, and social outcomes.

*2016 Iowa ACEs Report*

Many attendees at Iowa Afterschool Alliance listening sessions noted the need for their children and youth to build positive coping mechanisms and relationships, perhaps in response to adverse childhood experiences before or during school-age. One attendee stated that it was critical for her mental health facility to partner with the local afterschool program because they "[teach] coping skills [and] help improve overall mental health . . . [Our programming] reduces the stigma of seeking services later in life."

## Workforce Skills

An area of more focus at schools and within the community is ensuring youth graduating from high school have the skills necessary to be successful in work and college. Often called 21st Century Skills or soft skills, these skills play a foundational role in workplace success. Skills necessary for success in the workplace include responsibility, resiliency, adaptability, effective and appropriate verbal communication, persuasive written communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and many others. When Googling "business and soft skills," more than 8 million hits show. This is clearly an ever-important area of focus for schools, the community, and employers. In one listening session, an attendee made it very clear that this is a priority, saying, "In less than 10 years, [today's youth] will make up 75 percent of our workforce."

## STEM

Another area of intense focus in the past few years in Iowa and across the nation has been on increasing the number of students interested in and eventually going into STEM field careers. Iowa has made significant investment in programming and school redesign, as well as facilitating collaborations at the state and local level between business and educational institutions, to meet this end goal. Many elementary and secondary schools are improving children's access to advanced coursework in STEM. However, the key to moving students along that path to advanced coursework is engagement and excitement in STEM. With limited time during the school day, it is often hard to work in the "extras" that spark that passion for subjects, such as field trips, experiments, and real-world mentorships.

## Rurality

Finally, a major issue facing many Iowa communities is their distance from services and cultural institutions, the lack of transportation or high operational burden of providing transportation to and from programming, and the dearth of child care options available. Many communities cited transportation and access to programming as a primary barrier to meeting the demand in their community. If a program is not located at the school, it is often very difficult to transport children and youth to an off-site program, especially in communities that are very spread out, like in many of our rural areas.

Not only is it difficult to get children and youth to programming, it is also difficult and expensive to transport youth to opportunities that build their skills and broaden their base of understanding, such as museums, parks, science centers, zoos, and other educational resources. This becomes a matter of equity for our rural communities, and especially our children and youth.



*"In rural school districts, transportation is a huge need. Programs often have to think creatively about ensuring transportation for participating children and youth."*

*- Burlington Listening Session Attendee*

A critical issue also impacting rural areas is the severe shortage of child care. This is an issue of basic safety, not just of missed opportunities. In many of the Iowa Afterschool Alliance's listening sessions, especially those in rural areas, attendees remarked that a major concern for their communities is the lack of child care slots. Many of these communities are struggling to find grant funding to meet some of the demand, but it is difficult, and funds are often competitive.

Access to afterschool opportunities may be what sparks an interest in a subject, gets children and youth excited to take on math in school, or simply exposes them to new experiences. Many of our rural children and youth are not getting these opportunities. In a recent report focused on rural communities, the Afterschool Alliance found that "in rural communities, the overall demand for afterschool programs among minority and low-income families is particularly strong, and as a result, both participation in and unmet demand for afterschool programs is high."

*There is limited access to child care in the region – slots are filled for all times and ages.*

*- Red Oak Listening Session Attendee*



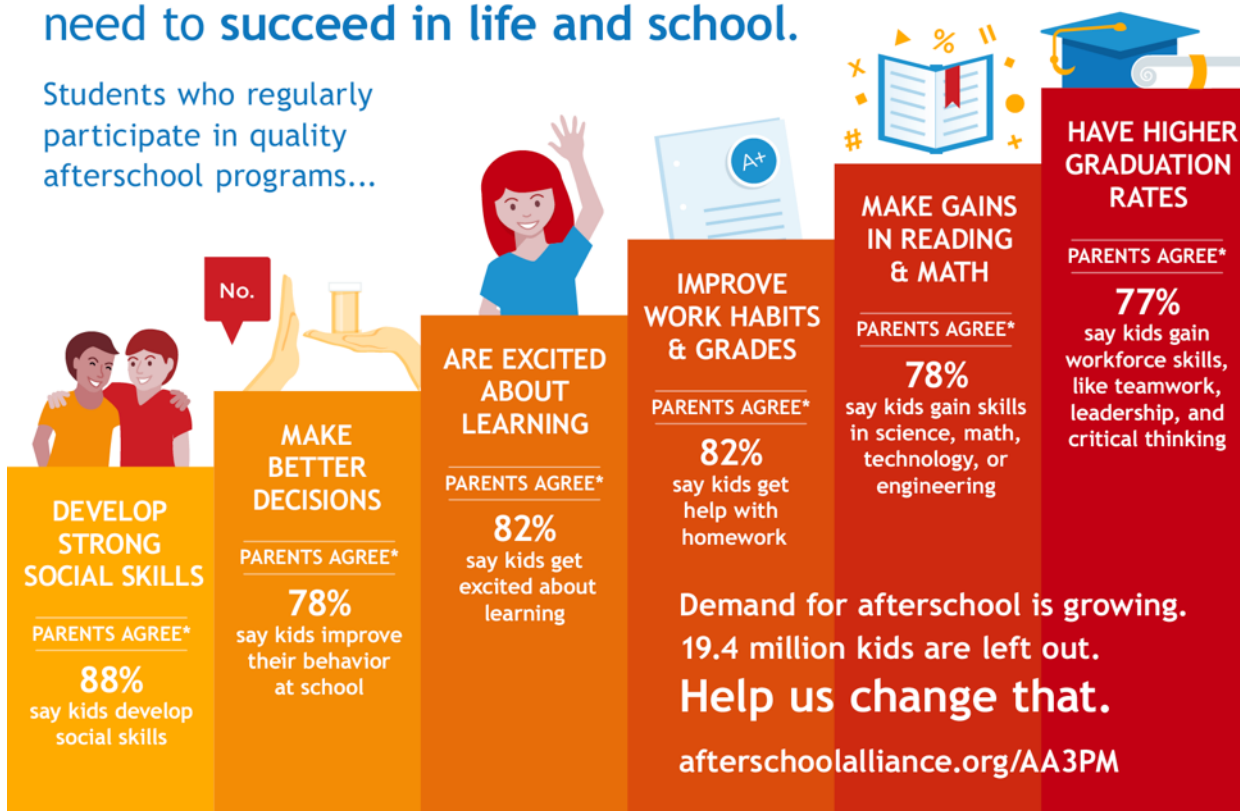
# HOW AFTERSCHOOL IS SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES IN IOWA

Children and youth are coming to school with many needs, and schools alone certainly can't ensure student success. Before-school, afterschool, and summer programming – or out-of-school time – are well positioned to support schools in raising achievement for all Iowa children and youth and to bridge critical connections to the community and families.

## Impact of Afterschool

Afterschool provides the building blocks kids need to succeed in life and school.

Students who regularly participate in quality afterschool programs...



\*Among parents with kids in afterschool programs

Sources:

<http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM>

[http://researchgate.net/publication/42346373\\_A\\_Meta-Analysis\\_of\\_After-School\\_Programs\\_That\\_Seek\\_to\\_Promote\\_Personal\\_and\\_Social\\_Skills\\_in\\_Children\\_and\\_Adolescents](http://researchgate.net/publication/42346373_A_Meta-Analysis_of_After-School_Programs_That_Seek_to_Promote_Personal_and_Social_Skills_in_Children_and_Adolescents)

[http://educarefoundation.com/wp-edudent/uploads/EduCare-Foundation\\_HS\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://educarefoundation.com/wp-edudent/uploads/EduCare-Foundation_HS_2010-2011.pdf)

<http://ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Students-and-Families-Great-Schools/Educational-Programming/21stCCLCs/RI21stCCLC-Impact-Report-2011-12.pdf>

[www.policystudies.com/studies/?id=32](http://www.policystudies.com/studies/?id=32)

[http://expandinglearning.org/research/vandell/resources/AERA\\_Promising\\_Programs\\_FINAL.pdf](http://expandinglearning.org/research/vandell/resources/AERA_Promising_Programs_FINAL.pdf)

[www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3546&menu\\_id=814](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3546&menu_id=814)

[www.k12.wa.us/21stCenturyLearning/pubdocs/14-1167WA21CCLCFinalYear2Report-ed.pdf](http://www.k12.wa.us/21stCenturyLearning/pubdocs/14-1167WA21CCLCFinalYear2Report-ed.pdf)



## Workforce Support

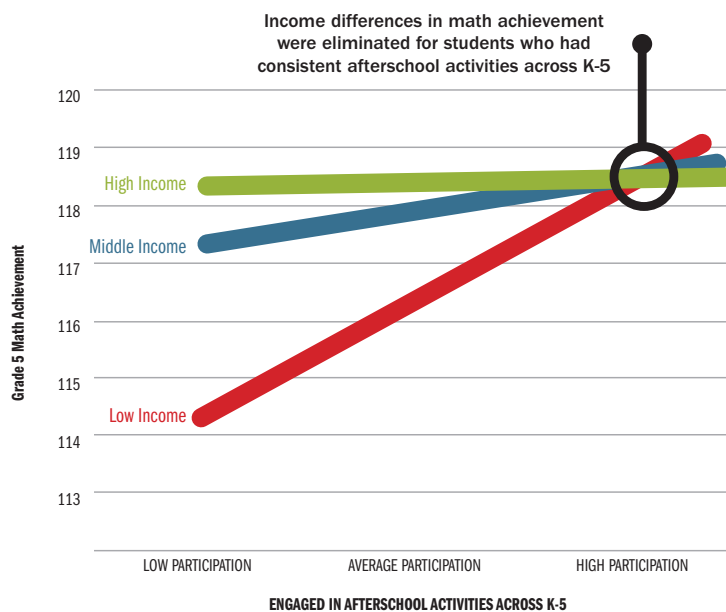
Afterschool and summer programming supports Iowa's workforce in three primary ways: 1) it serves as a safe and productive place for children and youth to be while parents are working, thus supporting Iowa's many working families; 2) afterschool and summer programming, when intentionally structured, develops critical college and career readiness skills that help our children and youth be better prepared to enter the workforce or postsecondary education; and 3) programs serve as incubators for the future education, social work, and other fields as youth workers move through frontline service, administration, and, perhaps, on to new opportunities within high-need fields.

For these reasons, afterschool and summer programming is an economic development strategy. Many schools have used afterschool and summer programming as an incentive to draw families to that district. Others see it as a driver of community change, attracting young families to communities where they know there will be good full-day and year-round options for their children. From a workforce perspective, afterschool programs are a great incubator of the future workforce: being a youth worker and program participant teaches adaptability, verbal communication, resiliency, and responsibility – those “soft skills” so many employers are looking for now.

## Academic Enrichment

Deborah Lowe Vandell, a prominent researcher of afterschool and summer programming, has recently published research linking extended learning before-school, afterschool and during the summer to closing the achievement gap. Vandell's research demonstrates that the more consistent the participation in extended learning, the narrower the gap in math achievement. Other research by Vandell and colleagues also finds that more time spent learning after school is associated with better work habits, improved academic performance, gains in self-efficacy, improved GPA, and decrease in school absences. Moreover, when youth enjoy their afterschool program, they show gains in the classroom.

### Afterschool Participation Narrows the Math Achievement Gap<sup>1</sup>



1. Pierce, K. M., Auger, A. and Vandell, D. L. (April, 2013). *Narrowing the Achievement Gap: Consistency and Intensity of Structured Activities Elementary School*. Unpublished paper presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Seattle, WA.

Many times youth just need a chance to make their learning real. Often higher income youth get chances to apply their learning in a number of different learning spaces, from home, to family trips, or in more everyday experiences such as going out to eat. Poor children do not get these same learning rich experiences. This is called the “Opportunity Gap”, and is linked not only to academic success but skill building, as well.

## Skill Building

The researchers Durlak and Weissberg have done significant research into this impact area. When studying what they term “SAFE” programs, or sequenced step-by-step training approach (S), emphasized active forms of learning by having youth practice new skills (A), focused specific time and attention on skill development (F) and explicit in defining the skills they were attempting to promote (E), they found that these programs were associated with significant improvements in self-perceptions, school bonding, and positive social behaviors; significant reductions in conduct problems and drug use; and significant increases in achievement test scores, grades, and school attendance.

Here, especially, the research shows the importance of quality in programming. Vandell’s research is grounded in the same design. Clearly, through both Durlak and Weissberg’s findings and Vandell’s research, it is critical to have a high-quality program, not just any program. This is why the Iowa Afterschool Alliance not only advocates for access to programming, but also works to ensure programs are of high quality to make the biggest impact.

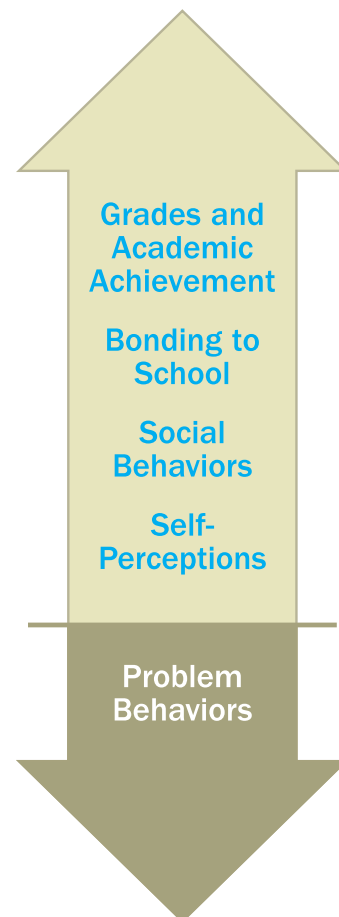
## Mentoring and Building Positive Relationships

Many attendees at the Iowa Afterschool Alliance Listening Sessions noted that afterschool programs are great vehicles for promoting positive relationships, not just between youth, but between mentors, other adults, and teachers. The time outside of school allows adults the time and a lower ratio of youth to adults to make better connections than they may be able to during the school day. What’s more, many programs intentionally connect youth to mentors through programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters, or for reading like Everybody Wins! Iowa, or for career exploration like the program Community Youth Concepts in Des Moines.

Structured mentoring has numerous benefits. According to the National Mentoring Partnership, students who meet regularly with their mentors are 52 percent less likely than their peers to skip a day of school and 37 percent less likely to skip a class. In addition to better school attendance and a better chance of going on to higher education, mentored youth maintain better attitudes toward school. Mentoring also brings positive adults from the community into the program. Volunteering in any capacity is a win-win for youth and the community.

# IMPACTS

## OF HIGH-QUALITY EXPANDED LEARNING



Source: Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P. and Pachan, M. "A Meta-Analysis of After-School Programs That Seek to Promote Personal and Social Skills in Children and Adolescents." *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 2010, pp. 249-309



## **STEM and Literacy**

STEM and Literacy have seen a dramatic rise in priority in Iowa over the past several years. STEM is a growing sector of the workforce, and basic literacy skills are required to be successful in school, work, and life. Afterschool has a role to play in both STEM and literacy, especially in igniting the passion of our children and youth to explore STEM and get excited about reading.

As a committee of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council, the Active Learning Community Partners have focused on developing the skills of informal educators and improving the consistency of experiences in the informal learning environments. Partners include afterschool, museums, science centers, the zoo, and many more. The Active Learning Community Partners are focusing on informal learning because of the recognition that it can make a big impact on students' interest and excitement for STEM learning during the school day. Intentionally linked to the school day, afterschool and other informal learning experiences also allow educators to reinforce concepts learned at school through teaching in a different way.

The same goes for literacy in afterschool time. Because of the flexibility in afterschool, educators can explore literacy in numerous ways to build a more solid foundation for reading in our young people, as well as continue to keep youth passionate about reading into their older school years. Programs can reinforce key literacy components, such as phonics and fluency, through many activities, including games, journaling, independent and paired or group reading, and recreational activities. When intentionally structured, afterschool can be a text-rich environment where children and youth are constantly immersed in literacy and building their skills and passion for lifelong learning.

## **Leveraging Resources through Partnerships**

High quality before-school, afterschool, and summer programs take partnerships seriously because they diversify the programming offered to children, youth, and families and leverage additional resources beyond the hard cash available for programming and operations.

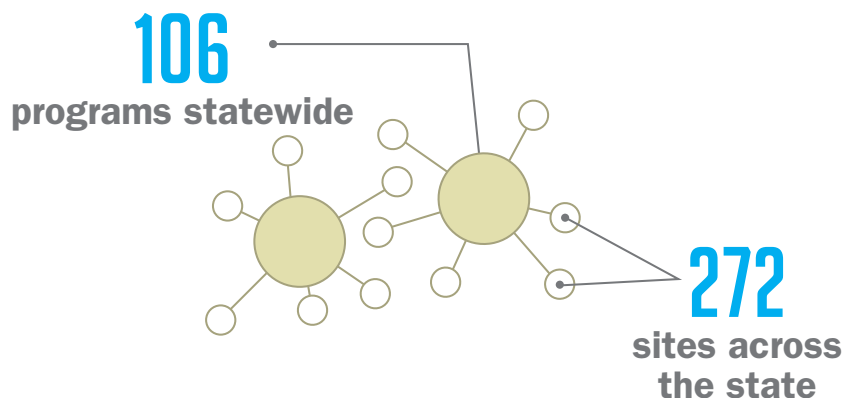
Iowa's primary source of funding, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, a federal funding source through the Every Student Succeeds Act administered by the Iowa Department of Education, requires partnerships for those very reasons. In 2016, 49 grants were awarded to 21 entities operating at 102 sites serving over 13,000 students. These 49 grants leveraged the services of well over 400 partners. This is dramatic evidence of afterschool's power to bring community together to leverage resources for the benefit of Iowa's children, youth, and families.

## **Return on Investment**

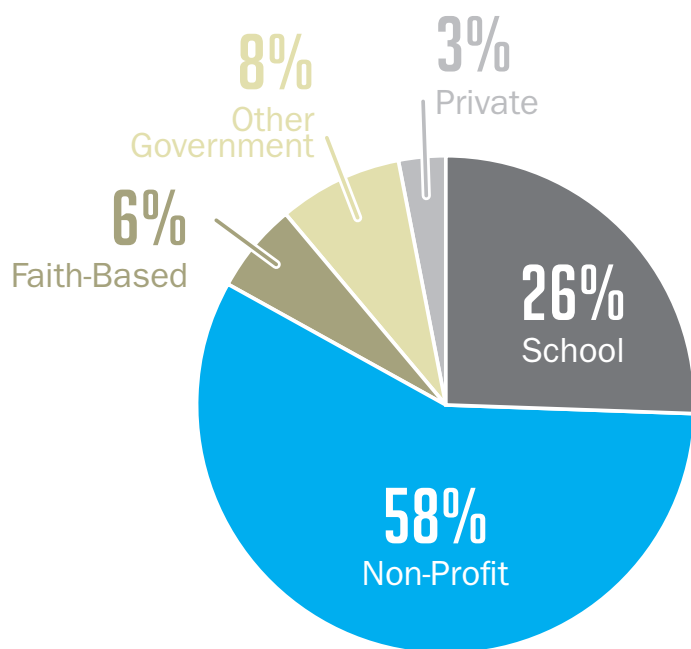
For every dollar spent on afterschool and summer programming, a \$4.89 return is realized through actual benefits to communities in the future. Because of programs' ability to impact better student attendance, school achievement, increased workforce preparedness, lower incidence of juvenile crime, and other measures, the benefit to communities is real in terms of higher productivity and lower crime costs. There is also an immediate return when programs collaborate with other community organizations, volunteers, the schools, and business to create a true community learning center. The dollars leveraged in the local community are real and build foundations of trust and togetherness that helps raise children and youth to be good citizens.

## Current State of Afterschool and Summer Programming in Iowa

Afterschool in Iowa is as diverse as Iowa's students and communities. This makes sense, since the IAA's philosophy is that programming should be tailored to the needs of our youth, as well as the particular assets within a community. This section provides a detailed picture of afterschool in Iowa today based on voluntary entries to the *Afterschool Opportunities Directory* accessed at [www.iowaafterschoolalliance.org/afterschool-programs](http://www.iowaafterschoolalliance.org/afterschool-programs). The Directory is a database of operational data on afterschool programs across the state and gives us a good idea of what is happening in out-of-school time.

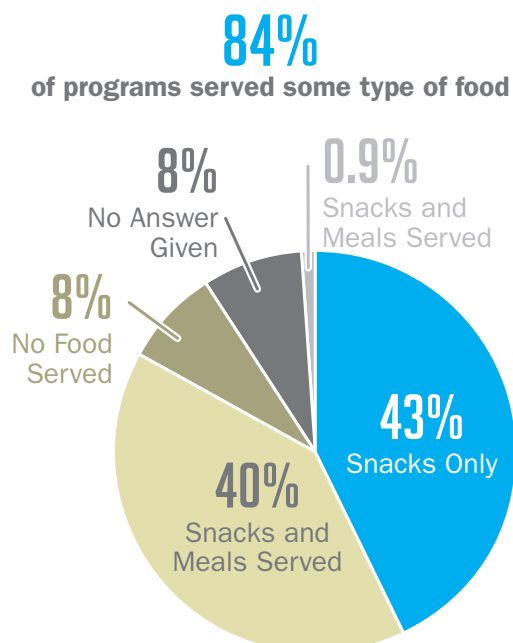


### TYPE OF ORGANIZATION RUNNING THE PROGRAM



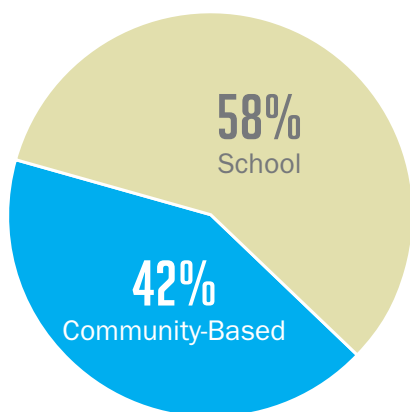
Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding

### FOOD SERVED



Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding

## TYPE OF SITE



**34%**  
School Year Only



**58%**  
Year Round

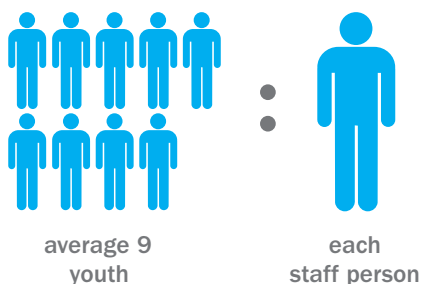


**8%**  
Summer Only

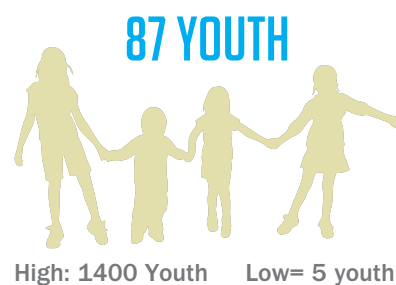
## AVERAGE OPERATING HOURS PER WEEK



## AVERAGE STUDENTS PER STAFF



## AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE



## TYPE OF PROGRAMMING OFFERED



**58%**  
Offer Homework Help



**69%**  
Offer Structured Enrichment



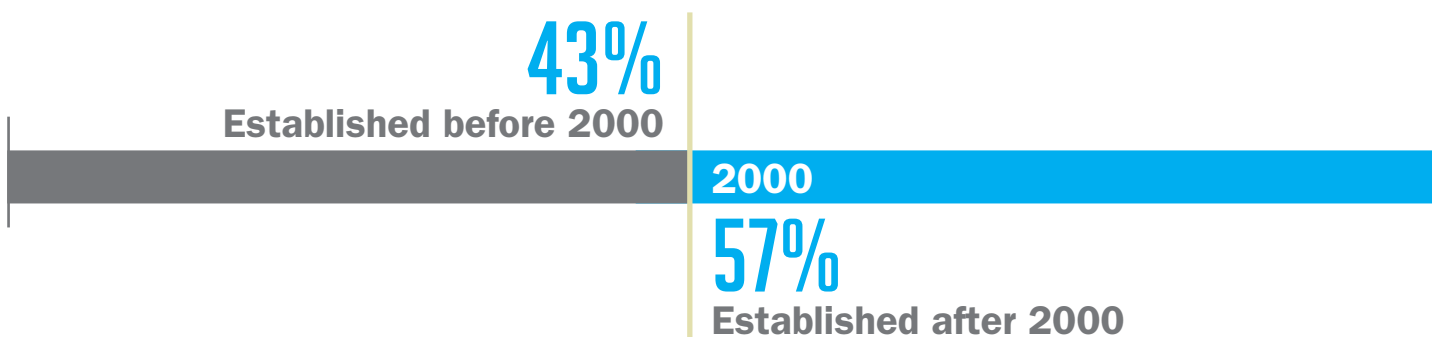
**43%**  
Offer STEM



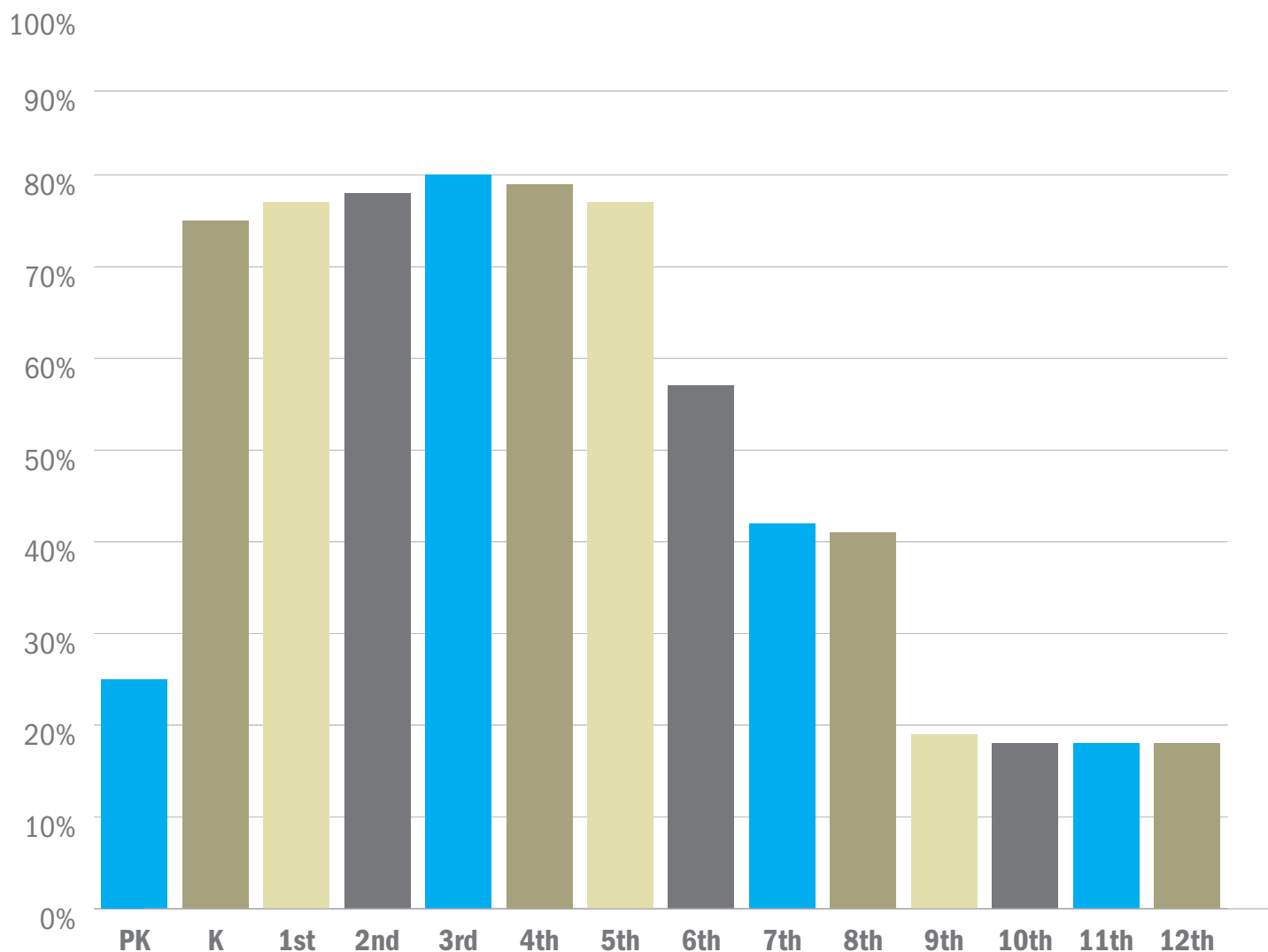
**13%**  
Offer College & Career Readiness Programming



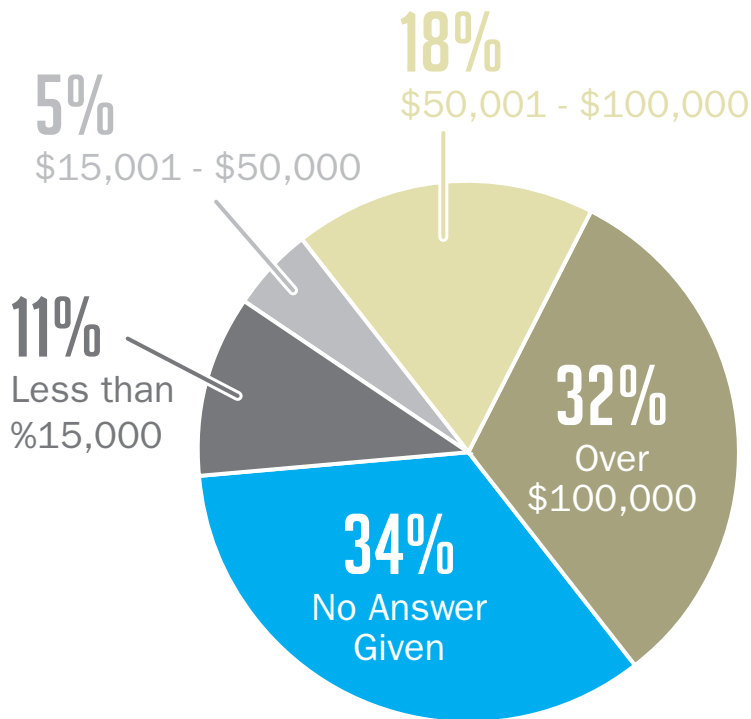
**48%**  
Offer Literacy



### GRADES SERVED BY NUMBER OF PROGRAMS

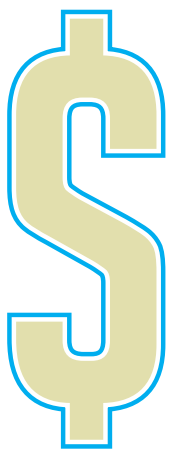


## ANNUAL BUDGET



Fees apply for programming in 60% of Iowa afterschool programs. Such fees may refer to daily fees, field trip costs, and other miscellaneous program costs.

## SOURCES OF FUNDING



- 11% Federal (public) - Direct
- 16% 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- 5% State (public) - Direct
- 10% Municipal (city) Funding
- 10% School District Funding
- 9% Other Local Funding

- 54% Parent Fees
- 32% Child Care Assistance
- 31% Private Grants
- 40% Fundraising/Donations
- 18% Other\*
- 5% Did Not Have Information or Choose Not to Give

\*"Other" included United Way funding, primarily

Afterschool programs in Iowa clearly rely on a mixture of funds to meet the demand for programming in their communities. Many programs rely on parent fees (54%) and supplement these fees through private grants (31%) and fundraising and donations (40%). This is a tough mix of funding, given the unpredictability of private grant funding and the time-consuming and resource-intensive efforts required to fundraise and seek donations. Reliance on parent fees, as heard in many of the listening sessions across the state, is getting harder and harder as parents struggle more to make ends meet.



## Case Studies

### Beyond the Bell Afterschool Program Serves High Need Youth in Sioux City, Iowa, and South Sioux City, Nebraska



Beyond the Bell operates 24 afterschool sites in the Siouxland area: 17 located in the Sioux City Community School District's elementary school and middle school buildings, one located in a parochial elementary school in Sioux City, and six in the South Sioux Community School's elementary school buildings in South Sioux City, Nebraska.

The program provides critical benefits to many families in need in the Sioux City, Iowa, and South Sioux City, Nebraska communities. Beyond the Bell provides nutritious snacks for students on a daily basis to ensure that no one is hungry during the program and that no one goes home hungry. The program also provides homework help (both with program staff and through tutoring services provided by certified teachers), stimulating educational centers that mirror some of the curriculum used during the school day but provided in a more hands-on and creative way, and recreational activities so that students who have been sitting in class all day can burn off energy.

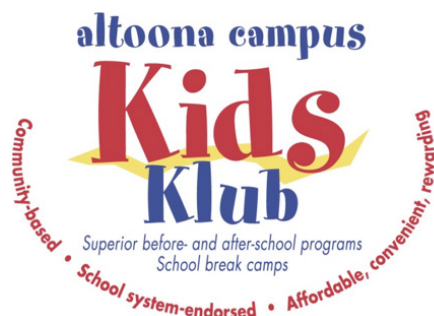
In these urban settings, Beyond the Bell must accommodate

many barriers, with the single biggest barrier being poverty. With a high percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, many parents cannot afford to access the program. 21st Century Community Learning Center grants create free access to low income students at over half of Beyond the Bell's Iowa sites, and the program has a sliding fee scale in place at all of their other sites to ensure that everyone that needs the program can access it. This is only made possible by funding from partners like the United Way of Siouxland and the Sioux City Community School District, and fundraising through partnerships with local businesses.

Transportation is an additional barrier for families, but through incredible partnerships with the school districts, Beyond the Bell is able to operate in the school buildings rent-free, as the districts see the program as a vital extension of the school day. This allows parents to drop off and pick up students at the same place that they attend school, reducing the majority of transportation barriers. Beyond the Bell also uses buses to transport students home at some schools for families that work extended hours or late shifts.



## Altoona Kids Klub: A Vital Parent and Child Support



Altoona Campus Kids Klub is a before and afterschool enrichment program that serves the Southeast Polk School District. Entering the 25th year of service to the community, Kids Klub is currently serving 7 of the 8 elementary buildings with the hope of expansion to the final elementary school in fall of 2016. In addition to school year programming, Kids Klub offers school-year day camps, winter break and spring break options, as well as, a full-day summer camp program. Beginning in fall of 2014, Kids Klub has provided a Full STEAM Ahead approach to learning by incorporating the use of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math into daily curriculum. The entire program has an emphasis on literacy, while providing ways for students to increase both social and emotional skills. The Kids Klub

program launched an incoming Kindergarten program during Summer Camp 2016, as a way to help prepare students for the first day of Kindergarten. Kids Klub strives to continue best practices in afterschool programming, by aligning with both the Iowa Afterschool Alliance and the State of Iowa Department of Human Services. Altoona Campus Kids Klub puts students first by keeping kids safe, supports working families, and helps cultivate student success.



We enrolled our daughter, Emerson, into the program during her kindergarten year and have continued to participate ever since! We take advantage of both the before/afterschool programming as well as special camps during breaks and the robust summer program they offer. With the advent of the Full STEAM Ahead approach in 2014 we have seen the program offerings and effectiveness blossom. This approach to learning incorporates academic elements in fun and meaningful ways – something that is incredibly

hard to do but very important to keep our kiddos engaged!

It is clear that the leadership and staff of the Kids Klub program not only care about the safety of our children, but they continually strive to enrich the lives of our kids through a holistic framework. I have seen my daughter improve her social and emotional skills, build confidence, negotiate conflict, and thrive academically over the past four years. While I would like to take full credit for this – I know she is better off for having been involved in the Kids Klub program!

We look forward to a great summer camp and to our 5th year with the Kids Klub program!

- Renee Miller, mother to Emerson



## Community Connections of Allamakee County Wins Awards for Family Engagement



In Allamakee's Community Connections program, the site coordinators know the families because they are from the community. There is a high level of trust and respect from years of history working together. One elementary site participates in the school events with support from the Parents for Progress (parent leadership organization) who have children in the afterschool program. About 98 percent of the parents pick up their children in two of the elementary programs. Many parents and grandparents pick up their children in the other elementary and junior high program. This affords daily communication on the progress of their children. The parents/family members often stay around pick up time to talk to each other for 5-30 minutes to share information and responsibility. The program also calls parents/families at

home for specific challenges. Some of the grandparents and/or senior citizens volunteer in the afterschool program for one-on-one reading. Many families donate with cash and supplies for the afterschool program. Allamakee also engages parents on an Advisory Board, where parents have an equal voice as those of school administrators and elected officials. Community Connections is regularly recognized, even nationally, for its efforts to engage family members in its afterschool programming.

A parent remarks, "If it weren't for this program, my son would be failing. I'm a working mother of three children and don't always have the time or knowledge to help all my children with their homework. Not only has this program helped my son's grades but his self-esteem. The staff are a great asset to have. They are courteous and helpful and very respectful towards the kids and parents. If I need anything all I have to do is ask. Thanks!" and "I think it's great for the kids to have a safe place with positive influences afterschool. It keeps kids out of trouble."


A site coordinator reports, "The number of students staying after is increasing in both programs. I have had numerous parents contact me about homework help for their son/daughter. We have students that have permanent folders in the afterschool program to keep track of assignments."

A parent and afterschool program Advisory Board member explained, "It's a shared voice with parents and kids on the advisory board. All work together to have a good program that meets student interests. [The site coordinator] is good about asking for ideas and activities that we can provide."






## Cedar Falls Holmes Jr. High Uses a Growth Mindset




### CHANGING OUR MINDSET

Carol Dweck, world-renowned Stanford University psychologist, talks about the power of our mindset or our beliefs (especially around challenge). We can either have a Fixed Mindset where we let failure (or even success) define who we are, or a Growth Mind set where we see setbacks as opportunities to grow and improve ourselves. Just like how we learned how to walk ... there are many stumbles along the way, but to reach our potential and live the life we desire, it takes practice and perseverance. We always have a choice about which view we adopt for ourselves ... and it's never too late to change. What's your view?




**FIXED MINDSET**  
Belief that my intelligence, personality and character are carved in stone; my potential is determined at birth



**GROWTH MINDSET**  
Belief that my intelligence, personality and character can be developed! A person's true potential is unknown (and unknowable).

<b>Desire</b>	Look smart in every situation and prove myself over and over again. Never fail!!	Stretch myself, take risks and learn. Bring on the challenges!
<b>Evaluation of Situations</b>	Will I succeed or fail? Will I look smart or dumb?	Will this allow me to grow? Will this help me overcome some of my challenges?
<b>Dealing with Setbacks</b>	"I'm a failure" (identity) "I'm an idiot"	"I failed" (action) "I'll try harder next time"
<b>Challenges</b>	Avoid challenges, get defensive or give up easily.	Embrace challenges, persist in the face of setbacks.
<b>Effort</b>	Why bother? It's not going to change anything.	Growth and learning require effort.
<b>Criticism</b>	Ignore constructive criticism.	Learn from criticism. How can I improve?
<b>Success of Others</b>	Feel threatened by the success of others. If you succeed, then I fail.	Finds lessons & inspiration in other people's success.
<b>Results....</b>	Plateau early, achieve less than my full potential.	Reach ever-higher levels of achievement.



Poster Designed for Holmes Jr. High based on the work of Carol Dweck, Stanford University

The ECHOES program at Holmes Junior High School offers a wide variety of programs and builds many positive adult-child relationships through in-school interventions, as well as out-of-school programming. Many students are at risk and need positive adult role models and a safe environment afterschool. The ECHOES program helps make connections with those students and influences students' academic performance by offering additional support.

The mission at Holmes Jr. High is to provide a positive and safe environment for the empowerment of youth, the encouragement of academic success, and the collaboration of peers, adult, and community. The school's goals are to offer activities, experiences, and relationships that promote growth in a student's developmental level, enhance academic performance, and deter harmful behaviors.

A significant part of the Holmes Jr. High Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) addresses providing enrichment opportunities for students through the afterschool ECHOES program, within "Tiger Time" during the school day, as well as during the summer. A portion of that enrichment includes the introduction and instruction of the "Mindset" concept developed by Dr. Carol Dweck. The school has monitored the effect their afterschool programs (academic and recreational) have had on the students in the areas of attendance, academic proficiency, assignment completion, and behavior referrals.

By infusing Dr. Dweck's Growth Mindset strategies into these programs, it has helped allow staff to connect with and support students who may not otherwise be motivated to be successful in those areas. The school creates real-world learning opportunities, in addition to a variety of collaborating partners within the learning community, and has documented the successes these students have had in all these areas as part of the school improvement plan.

A growth mindset doesn't imply that everyone is the same or that anyone could be Einstein, but it does imply that everyone's intellectual ability can grow – and that even Einstein wasn't Einstein before he put in years of passionate, relentless effort. Recent research has shown that students' mindsets have a direct influence on their grades and that teaching students to have a growth mindset raises their grades and achievement test scores significantly.



*Major Darren Grimshaw of the Burlington Police Department on a field trip with youth in the Burlington Schools PIECES Middle School Program*



## Law Enforcement Partnerships Develop Relationships in Burlington

*This case study includes excerpts from an article that appeared online on the Mott Foundation website on February 24, 2016. Full article accessible at <https://www.mott.org/news/articles/police-officers-dedication-afterschool-leads-local-state-national-partnerships/>.*

Police officers sometimes find themselves on unfamiliar beats. So it was that Major Darren Grimshaw, a 27-year veteran of the Burlington, Iowa, Police Department, found himself in a middle-school classroom several years ago, explaining his career choice to a roomful of sixth-graders taking part in PIECES, the city's afterschool program.

"I volunteered to do it, and I realized how much I enjoyed interacting with the kids in that role," Grimshaw said, adding that it's what "hooked" him on his long-time involvement with afterschool programs – first locally, and now at the state and national levels.

Grimshaw's boss, Doug Beaird, chief of the Burlington Police Department, has backed his involvement with afterschool activities from the beginning.

"Doug believes that, if you build trust with the community, we all benefit. He's really encouraged us to become more engaged with the community outside normal police practices," Grimshaw said.

Over the past several years, members of the Burlington Police Department have been directly involved with afterschool programming for a number of reasons. Chief Doug Beaird decided early after his appointment to Chief that the department's role in the Burlington community needed to change. Efforts had been made in the past to increase community collaborations and to develop trust amongst our most at risk citizens.

Burlington Police found an avenue within the district's afterschool programs that allows them to create significant relationships with school children and their families in ways they never have before. Providing substantial time for officers in the schools to build positive relationships built on mutual respect and trust has proven to reap benefits the department could not have imagined. Burlington's School Resource Officers work directly with afterschool providers in developing curriculum and hosting club activities such as CSI night, Ultimate Frisbee, and flag football. By allowing police officers an opportunity to interact with children in a non-enforcement capacity in street clothes has also proven to be an effective way to increase social interaction amongst the community's children and officers. "Following a suggestion by students last year we have begun stepping out of the uniform and into plain clothes, thus creating a more approachable appearance," Grimshaw said.

## Awesome Summer Days

**Dates of Operation:** June 5 – July 3 (4 weeks)

**Grades served:** K - 5

**Total students served:** 65

**Student demographics:** 54% black, 27% Latino, 8% white, 5% Asian, 5% mixed race

**Paid staff:** 3 certified teachers, 8 college students, 1 high school student, 2 regular CFUM staff



Of the 3,500 households that make up the Des Moines, Iowa, River Bend neighborhood served by CFUM, 52 percent are headed by single parents; the per capita income for the neighborhood is below \$11,500. All students attending Moulton Extended Learning Center, the neighborhood school located directly across from CFUM, receive free meals. The school experiences a mobility rate of more than 50 percent each year. Unfortunately, children in poverty are disproportionately affected by the “summer slide,” or the loss of reading proficiency developed during the school year. Studies have shown that low-income students lose more than two months in reading achievement over the summer months, despite the fact that their middle-class peers make slight gains. More than half of this achievement gap can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college.

*Awesome Summer Days* at CFUM uses project-based learning built around a broad, summer-wide theme. In 2014 the theme was “Roots Rock!” which included activities around a range of definitions of roots, including:

- » plant and tree roots
- » ethnic and family roots, and
- » neighborhood and city roots

The program is distinguished by time dedicated to academics, which is planned and resourced by certified teachers. In this targeted learning time students read, kept journals, and participated in field experiences, weekly trips to the neighborhood library, and a week of swimming lessons. Students were also served breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks five days a week.



*Without the programming at CFUM, we would not be able to do what we do with our students. Our parents rely on their programming to provide support during our various breaks throughout the year and during the summer. Our students talk about the great experiences they have with CFUM with enthusiasm! That's what it's all about: happy kids that want to make learning a priority.*

*– Cheri Dixon, Principal, Moulton Extended Learning Center*

Mitigating the effects of the stresses of poverty for the young people CFUM serves is a central focus of the organization's mission and a primary goal of *Awesome Summer Days*. To that end, key objectives of the program include building long-term mutually beneficial relationships with families and students, employing a variety of methods to address the diversity of the participants, connecting literacy to all areas of academic studies as well as to outside experiences and events, and mitigating summer learning loss. In addition to helping students maintain and build on the learning gains they'd made during the school year, the program also provided a safety net for working families and academic support and enrichment for children during out-of-school times.

Appreciation and awareness of the impact of CFUM's work abounds. Parents see changes and growth in their children, and neighborhood leaders see irreplaceable support for students living in poverty in CFUM's work. A parent who has had three children in the program has seen incredible growth in her children through their participation in *Awesome Summer Days* and CFUM's school-year programming. She has seen her kids transition from participants to mentors and leaders, volunteering their time and taking on new independent projects. Cameron Nicholson, the Executive Director of the Grubb YMCA, a close partner of CFUM, says that the organization's programs are high quality and staffed "with caring and trained adults, creative and fun activities, in a safe environment."

As summer enrichment opportunities expand nationally, it's increasingly important to direct limited community resources to programs that are highly effective and replicable. Dissecting CFUM's strategies and impact highlights a number of distinct, replicable components that are essential to its success. Most importantly, the year-round programming offered at CFUM and the smaller scale, neighborhood focus of the organization allows for close relationships with kids. They have created an environment where each child is known by name and appreciated. Program leaders and staff set high expectations for participant behavior, attendance, and engagement, and then follow through on rewards and consequences based on those expectations. Long-term relationships with families are another building block of CFUM's success, as are the breakfast, dinner, and snack options CFUM provides year-round to serve its community. These points of connection to family and community have gone a long way to build trust and neighborhood and family buy-in that makes the program so successful.

Achieving a positive relationship among the critical partners of the provider agency and the neighborhood school is a component successfully developed and maintained by CFUM and Moulton Extended Learning Center, and one that is critical to replication of the CFUM summer model. There is data and information sharing and a symbiotic relationship of two entities working towards the same goal. This is not something that was established overnight; such a strong collaboration takes time and can be put at risk when any one individual changes roles or leaves the organization. However, it cannot be overstated how important this component is to making any impact on academic outcome.

Other components for replication include the focus on literacy and the use of a project-based approach with the support of highly qualified staff. Sometimes considered a challenge for cash-strapped organizations, ensuring quality staffing is possible even for organizations with smaller budgets. CFUM's model of staffing programming with teachers from the neighborhood school, in addition to building the capacity of other, non-certified program staff, is one that assures quality of all program content. CFUM also utilizes service learning and hires college students. A mix of certified and non-certified staff makes replication more reasonable.

**87%** of participants' reading levels progressed or stayed the same over the summer break. 58% of these students made **gains** of at least one reading level over the summer. Of this group that made improvements in their reading level, almost one-third improved by **two or more** reading levels over the summer!

### Summer Program Budget

Staffing (wages and benefits):  
\$36,000

Program expenses: \$6,800

Operational costs: \$22,000

Total cost summer 2014:  
\$64,800

### Partnerships

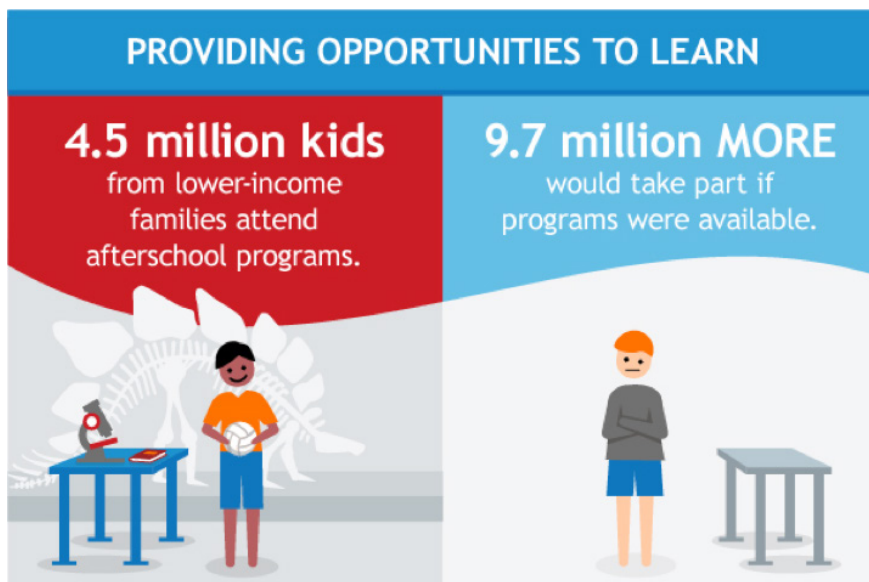
- » 6th Avenue Corridor
- » Des Moines Parks and Recreation
- » Evelyn Davis Center for Working Families
- » Forest Avenue Library
- » Grubb YMCA
- » Habitat for Humanity
- » Iowa Cubs Baseball Team
- » Literacy Coach through United Way of Central Iowa Out-of-School Time Literacy Initiative
- » Red Cross
- » River Bend Neighborhood Association
- » Seven area colleges and universities
- » Staff from Moulton Extended Learning Center

# WHAT STILL NEEDS TO HAPPEN TO FULLY SUPPORT ALL IOWA CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

We're a long ways from serving all children and youth in afterschool and summer learning programming. According to the Afterschool Alliance, 33 percent of children and youth would participate in a program if there was one accessible to them. In Iowa, with 76 percent of parents working outside the home (National Kids Count), parents, often working a job schedule that is not aligned with their children's school day, need such supports to cover this gap in schedules for the safety of their children and their jobs. Anecdotally, many communities know that there is an increasing demand for afterschool and summer programs – more parents working, sometimes in multiple jobs, highlights the need for safe, enriching places for children and youth to be while parents are at work.

But the programs just aren't accessible to many working families and older youth. This is a significant missed opportunity to get more kids excited about learning, engaged in school and their community, and productive during times they may otherwise be at risk. We must do more for our children, youth, and families, especially those most in need of such programming.

## Barriers to Access to High Quality Programming



By 6th grade, middle class kids have spent  
**4,000+ more hours** in afterschool and summer  
learning opportunities than low-income students.



Learn more at [www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM)  
<http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM>  
[www.expandedschools.org/sites/default/files/tasc\\_6000-hours-infographic.pdf](http://www.expandedschools.org/sites/default/files/tasc_6000-hours-infographic.pdf)

In Iowa, 86 percent of our children and youth are not currently served by an afterschool program (Afterschool Alliance). This is a significant missed opportunity, and is, in some cases, dangerous. We must do more to ensure greater access to programs. A 2014 study of parents found that 33 percent of children and youth not already in a program would participate if one was available to them. This means that of Iowa's total PK-12 enrollment of 480,062 students, 136,242 are looking for an afterschool opportunity.

So what are the primary barriers to getting greater involvement in programming?

Based on response from the Iowa Afterschool Alliance listening sessions and daily work with afterschool and summer programs, here are a few areas of focus to broaden participation and make a greater impact in the lives of our young people.





## Sufficient Funding

Afterschool and summer programs are often seen as low priorities for school districts with very limited resources. It is not a condemnation of schools that this is the case. Rather, it should serve as a wake-up call that our schools are underfunded to truly make the impact needed for student success.

There is clear unmet demand for programming. To minimally meet the demand for programming, by making the commitment to fund afterschool and summer programs at a level that provides for high quality programming in any community across the state, would require an investment of over \$280 million. Given current funding environments in both the public and private sector, that is not likely to be leveraged soon.

However, there is always a starting place. If we are to meet just 10 percent of the current demand for programming, Iowa must prioritize funding for before-school, afterschool, and summer programming at \$2.8 million. Basic funding for programming is a significant need. The Iowa Afterschool Alliance heard this regularly in all listening sessions. Here are just a few comments when asked about barriers to participation:

- » “Financial barriers are a huge concern: parents can’t afford program fees, programs cannot charge for middle school programming, and you need more funding to support more staff to serve more youth to meet demand.”  
– Sioux City Attendee
- » “There are financial barriers.” – Oelwein Attendee
- » “Funding is often for programmatic expenses and can’t cover operations.” – Des Moines Attendee
- » “Grants require a huge administrative burden to write them and evaluate activities.” – Des Moines Attendee
- » “Income-based programming is a barrier.” – Red Oak Attendee
- » “Financial issues are barriers, especially when there is a lack of grant funding.” – Clinton Attendee

**480,062** > **86%** > **33%** > **136,242 YOUTH**

Total PK-12 Iowa  
Enrollment

Percent of Youth Not Served  
by Afterschool Programs

Percent of Youth Who would  
Participate in Programs if Available

Unmet Demand for Programming

**\$2100**

21CCLC Cost Per  
Student Per Day –  
Annual



**\$286,108,200**

Annual Cost to Meet Unmet Demand  
(Based on 180 school days  
and 30 summer days)



**\$2,861,082**

Cost to meet 10% of Unmet  
Demand for Afterschool and  
Summer Programming for One Year

## Staffing

Although related to funding, staffing afterschool and summer programs is a barrier worth mentioning on its own. Staffing can often be difficult for afterschool and, to a less extent, summer programs because of the time commitment. The nature of afterschool only requires part-time employment for frontline staff. During the school year, teachers – and rightfully so – may decline to work the afterschool program due to long hours. Very few people can work just several hours each day, so programs often seek college students or high school students to fill the need. This is difficult if you do not run a program close to a college or university. Programs are lucky to be able to hire full-time site or program coordinators; these individuals often have education or social work backgrounds.

The makeup of the youth services workforce demands accessible and reliable professional development. Especially given the Iowa Department of Human Services licensing requirements for pre-service training and professional development of all staff, this is a growing need across the state. Currently, there are not enough opportunities for professional development for programs serving school-age youth (grades K-12). Although the Iowa Afterschool Alliance and a few partners offer professional development statewide, offerings are limited, especially in rural communities.

## Transportation

Much like staffing, the barrier of transportation is often related to funding, but is worth mentioning on its own. As was mentioned in the section on rurality in the Youth and Community Needs section, transportation is often a primary barrier for participation, especially among older youth and for those programs operating outside of a school. In almost every Iowa Afterschool Alliance listening session – both urban and rural – stakeholders noted the importance of transportation to ensure accessible programming. Transportation must be addressed, either in general funding for programming or as a specific fund.

Additionally, significant outreach must be undertaken to address the issues of transportation policy. Municipal bus systems often do not provide needed routes or times for students to commute to and from programming. Some programs have found it difficult to recruit school bus drivers to extend their days into the afterschool time. Other programs have chartered private bus companies. Many of these issues get down to funding. This is clearly an area that should be addressed to make a large impact on participation across the state.





## The Value of Stakeholder Support

To truly make significant gains in the number of children and youth served in afterschool and summer programming across the state, these learning opportunities must be a priority in discussions ranging from workforce development to education and beyond. There are numerous coalitions and organizations currently prioritizing afterschool and summer learning in some way, and they are recognized here. These efforts must continue to focus on the importance of afterschool and summer learning within broader contexts, such as STEM, and, in some cases, can be ramped up. But there are other key stakeholders that have a role to play, as well. These groups, and how they can help, are identified and called to action at the end of this section.

### Coalitions and Organizations Already Prioritizing Afterschool and Summer Learning

#### 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Iowa Department of Education

The single most important funding stream for afterschool in Iowa, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program administered by the Iowa Department of Education, has long been Iowa's opportunity to showcase high quality afterschool in our state. Through a peer learning community, 21st Century Community Learning Centers grantees are developed as strong leaders for afterschool in our state.

#### Campaign for Grade Level Reading

This national movement recognizes three major categories of support to fully develop a child's ability to read at grade level by third grade: school readiness, school attendance, and summer learning. The Campaign is based on the premise that schools cannot ensure literacy, alone, but that the community and families have a role to play, as well. Iowa has an active network focusing on the Campaign's three support areas, and many of the communities within the network also prioritize afterschool learning as an additional support to ensure reading success by the end of third grade. For more information, visit <http://gradelevelreading.net/>.

#### The Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council and STEM Hub System

A committee of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council, the STEM Active Learning Community Partners, focuses solely on informal, out-of-school time STEM and, specifically, supporting informal educators to deliver high-quality STEM activities in various settings, including afterschool programs. The Advisory Council and STEM Hubs across the state look at afterschool and summer programming as another avenue for encouraging youths' passion for STEM and improving engagement in STEM subjects in school. For more information, visit [www.iowastem.gov](http://www.iowastem.gov).

#### State Child Care Advisory Council

The State Child Care Advisory Council is an advisory group to the Iowa Department of Human Services. While its focus is on birth to twelve, school-age programming is becoming a bigger focus area as the state transitions to new federal regulations that require specific activities and support for school-age care.

#### United Ways of Iowa

As part of their community impact framework that includes financial security and health and well-being in addition to education, afterschool and summer learning has become a major investment for United Ways across the state. They have, often significant, vested interest in ensuring access to programming in their service areas, as well as ensuring programs are of high quality and truly making an impact in the lives of the most vulnerable youth in Iowa.

## YMCAs and YWCAs

Born out of Christian principles to develop character and healthy lifestyles among young men and women, YMCAs and YWCAs are some of Iowa's largest providers of child care and youth development programming. They often serve as a major activity center in rural communities, providing critical space and enrichment opportunities to communities of all sizes.

## Iowa Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs

Targeting some of Iowa's most at-risk youth, Iowa's Boys and Girls Clubs offer enrichment programming before-school, afterschool, and over the summer, with some programs co-located at a school. Boys and Girls Clubs have a strong capacity and name recognition that allows them to serve large numbers of high-need children and youth across the state, most prominently in Iowa's urban centers.

## Association of Iowa Workforce Partners

The Association of Iowa Workforce Partners, representing federal workforce directors across the state, and the regions they represent across the state, utilize afterschool programs to reach older youth for skill building programming that help them transition to the workforce from school. They often connect older youth on the verge of dropping out, or as a dropout, with opportunities to receive their high school equivalency while developing key workforce and professional skills that will help them within their chosen career pathway. For more information, please visit [www.iaworkforcepartners.org](http://www.iaworkforcepartners.org).

## John Deere Foundation, Rockwell Collins, and Other Corporate Funders

Many local programs depend on private funding from local and more regional companies to provide programming. With the investment in a national report on afterschool in rural communities, the John Deere Foundation has taken the lead in promoting afterschool and has sustained this commitment through a grant to the Iowa Afterschool Alliance to focus on STEM professional development. Other large and small corporate funders across the state have invested significant resources in local afterschool programming, as well as the state STEM work through the Governor's Advisory Council.

## Skills2Compete Coalition

This coalition of over 25 organizations provides annual recommendations to the Iowa Legislature on issues related to workforce development. One such recommendation focuses on the "child care cliff effect" and ensuring the costs of child care aren't holding Iowans back from taking jobs best suited for their skill set.

## Every Child Matters – Iowa

A non-partisan advocacy organization, Every Child Matters serves to inject issues concerning families, children, and youth into the conversation during election cycles. Afterschool and summer learning has always been a component of candidate inquiry and discussions, as they host forums and convene stakeholders to talk one-on-one with candidates about issues of importance to Iowa families. Find out more at <http://everychildmatters.org/state-campaigns/iowa/>.

## Iowa's Congressional Delegation

In the recent debates over the Every Student Succeeds Act that replaced No Child Left Behind, Iowa's Congressional delegation ensured that federal funds remained intact for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, Iowa's only funding source solely for afterschool and summer learning. More debates will come before them where they have the chance to prioritize afterschool and summer learning, including STEM education.

## Other Stakeholders Can Help

### Iowa State Board of Education

The Board of Education in Iowa is charged with implementing our state's vision for education, and thus sets priorities for education statewide. By making afterschool and summer learning one of those priorities, such a statement would go a long way in focusing more resources on this critical time for learning. Additionally, such a statement would also help afterschool rise to priority status in discussions centered on implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act. Currently, states are discussing regulations around various components of the law, and several components allow for the use of funds on afterschool and summer programming.

### Mayors and Other Local Elected Officials

Much like the Board of Education, mayors have a great influence on local policy. By using their bully pulpit to advocate for youth, generally, and afterschool and summer learning, more specifically, more options for learning outside the school day will likely follow. Mayors maintain strong relationships and sway among the various stakeholders within a community, from business to schools, to libraries and police departments. Thus, mayors can be a very value voice for Iowa's children and youth.

### State Legislators

The most important thing state legislators can do is get to know their local programs and schools. This may sound too easy, but once legislators know and see the value of programs in their community, they will come to see their value to their community and the state and ensuring all children and youth have equal access to learning opportunities outside the school day.

### Local School Leaders

We need more school principals like Steve Mielenhausen, Principal at Madison Elementary in Davenport, Iowa, and the Iowa Afterschool Alliance's 2016 Principal of the Year, who sees it as part of his role as school leader to reach out to the community to ensure his students have the services they need to be successful in school and life. At Madison Elementary, they are implementing a full-service community school model, which includes afterschool and summer programming, but also includes services like health and mental health care, dental, and a clothes closet. Although this is an exemplary model, principals can go a long way in ensuring their students are successful by doing the same and reaching out to the community to ensure students have options afterschool.



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**Our Vision:** All Iowa children, youth, and families will have access to quality out-of-school time opportunities in their community.

**Our Mission:** Develop strong statewide systems of support for high-quality, affordable, and accessible before-school, afterschool, and summer programs.



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