

Investing in Minnesota's Success: The Power of Afterschool



Afterschool Programs:

Prepare Youth for the 21st Century

- Develop skills for the new economy^{i,ii}
- Provide hands-on experiences that ignite passions^{iii,iv,v}
- Connect interests to college and career opportunities^{vi,vii,viii}

Support Student Success

- Improve academic performance^{ix,x}
- Narrow the opportunity gap^{xi}
- Foster positive youth outcomes; e.g., collaboration skills, self-confidence, a sense of agency, and more^{xii}

Help Working Families & Keep Kids Safe

- Helps working families by providing their children with safe spaces^{xiii, xiv, xv}
- Fosters physical, emotional, and mental health^{xvi, xvii, xviii}
- Provides enriching experiences during adolescence, when youth develop crucial cognitive functions^{xix, xx}

What are Afterschool Programs?

Afterschool programs refer to activities that take place outside the school day or during the summer. They offer a range of experiences, from a small group tutoring session, to a summer tennis program, to an afterschool robotics club, and much more! They allow youth to experiment and discover their interests in unique learning environments that are hands-on, collaborative, and fun!

Why Does Minnesota Need Afterschool?

Minnesota will face daunting challenges in the coming years: preparing citizens and workers for the 21st century global economy, narrowing the harmful achievement and opportunity gap, and ensuring all communities have safe and engaging places for children. Afterschool programs are uniquely positioned to help our youth, our communities, and our state tackle these challenges.

Research shows that afterschool makes a positive impact when programs have resources to ensure that:^{xxi}

1. Youth have access to and sustain participation in programs
2. Sites have intentional programming and trained staff
3. Programs are connected to families, community organizations, and schools

Unfortunately, Minnesota has lost nearly one-third of consistent, dedicated, and substantial sources of funding for afterschool programs over the last six years.^{xxii} The most recent survey of Minnesota youth and families shows the unmet demand for these programs:^{xxiii, xxiv, xxv}

- 32% of youth (K-12) are responsible for taking care of themselves after school
- 33% of youth would participate in an afterschool program if it were available to them
- 56% of parents struggle occasionally or often to find activities for their children to do

Investing in Minnesota

Afterschool programs are about success for all Minnesotans – every youth, family, employer, school, and community. They connect us in a shared effort to ignite learning and prepare Minnesota for the fresh challenges ahead. Investing in afterschool is an investment in Minnesota's future – let's make that investment.

Sources

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