Student Wellness and Success in Ohio: Districts and Afterschool Can Be Partners

THE OPPORTUNITY

Governor DeWine’s Student Wellness and Success plan allocates $250M in 2020 and $300M in 2021 statewide to school districts to provide wraparound services that kids need to thrive, both in and out of school.

This plan requires districts to coordinate with at least one community organization. Afterschool programs may be the solution for school districts that are seeking partners, as they provide mental health services, mentoring, family engagement and more to students outside of the traditional school day.

PARTNERING WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Districts may consider leveraging existing partnerships with afterschool programs or building new relationships with organizations that provide afterschool in their community. Afterschool provides a flexible environment and has a proven track record for teaching young people social and emotional learning skills, helping them build healthy relationships, increasing resilience, and boosting academic achievement. Afterschool programs also have expertise leveraging community partners, volunteers and parents to help address youth risk factors.

Kids who regularly participate in quality afterschool programs:

- Gain self-control and confidence
- Develop strong social skills
- Improve work habits and grades
- Improve school attendance and behavior

Afterschool programs can provide a great benefit to school districts.

- Afterschool programs help protect instructional time. Work with your district to understand the afterschool services that students need.
- Make the most of Ohio’s investment. For every dollar spent on quality afterschool and summer learning programs, Ohio saves $2.18 from reduced criminal activity and substance abuse treatment, as well as additional benefits from increased high school completion and work productivity.
- Respond to the opioid epidemic. Quality afterschool programs provide trauma-informed practices that offset the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Addressing the impact of ACEs in turn reduces development of substance use disorders and other future health concerns.
WHAT AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS CAN DO

This new funding gives school districts the opportunity to partner with afterschool programs. Here are a few tips to take the first steps in partnering with your local school district:

▪ **Invite your local District Leadership Team to connect with your afterschool leadership.** Help districts understand what partnerships you have and how they can leverage them.

▪ **Be innovative.** Suggest new and innovative ways to utilize these funds with your school district.

▪ **Know the Facts.** Review the research about the value of afterschool so you can explain it to others in your program and your local district why partnering is a great way to invest in student success. One great fact to communicate is the value of your 21st Century Community Learning Center. Ohio’s existing 21st CCLC programs are already providing high-quality afterschool programs with math and Language arts tutoring, family engagement and high-quality youth development programs. In Ohio, these programs currently serve 14,000 youth annually in 212 programs.

According to teachers, students who participate in a 21st CCLC afterschool program improve their math and language arts grades, homework completion, class participation, and behavior in class.

▪ **Participate in an OAN webinar or attend a Planning Workshop.** OAN will host a series of regional planning meetings to help partners identify innovative ways to best maximize this opportunity using evidence-based practices. Visit [www.OANOhio.org](http://www.OANOhio.org) to learn more!

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