



ESSA: A New Era for Education and Afterschool in Ohio

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the new K-12 federal education law, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces No Child Left Behind.

Ensuring all students have access to a quality education—inside and outside the classroom—is one of ESSA’s key goals. Now more than ever there are tremendous opportunities for afterschool programs across our state to work closer with their local school districts to help reinforce what happens in the classroom.

Here are a few key ways that afterschool programs are prepared to help:

- **Supporting Student Success** – Students spend only 20% of their time in the classroom... the rest of it is spent before school, after school or in summer. Afterschool and summer learning programs are critically important in expanding time to support youth development and student success.
- **Expanding School Resources** – Afterschool programs are experts at leveraging community partners, volunteers and parents to help address youth risk factors. Utilizing these stakeholder partnerships, afterschool programs can increase school district capacity by connecting services and resources to students and their families.

- **Increasing Student Attendance and Reducing Discipline Issues** – School districts are encouraged to use discipline strategies ranging from prevention to supportive interventions to address student misbehavior. Participation in an afterschool program can reduce discipline referrals and increase classroom behavior.
- **Engaging Students in Non-Traditional Learning Experiences** – High quality afterschool and summer learning programs can engage students in a multi-faceted menu of learning, enrichment, character development and post-secondary exploration. Students get an opportunity to gain a positive identity and explore in a variety of ways unavailable to them during the school day.

Visit the OAN website to learn about upcoming opportunities to engage in ESSA implementation:

www.ohioafterschoolnetwork.org/essa-and-afterschool-what-you-need-to-know

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WHAT YOU (AS A PROGRAM, PARENT, OR PARTNER) CAN DO:

Share the facts and your own story. Explain how afterschool benefits the students, families, and schools in your community. Look for opportunities to share factsheets showing how afterschool supports academic success, helps to close the achievement gap, reduces absenteeism, and helps students graduate.

- Afterschool is a crucial strategy for improving schools and academic achievement—these programs help students make gains in reading and math and improve their grades and test scores.
- Research shows that afterschool helps reduce chronic absenteeism and improve graduation rates for students who regularly attend quality programs.
- Afterschool programs show the greatest effects on student improvement in high-risk populations, such as low-income students or minority students.
- Afterschool programs should be considered as part of a student success dashboard or indicators since the research is clear that participation in an afterschool or summer learning program significantly contributes to a student's success.

Sharing details and personal experiences that explain how afterschool is improving the lives of children and their families will help breathe life into these facts and show local school leaders and the Department of Education that their investment in afterschool is a smart one!

Talk to your school district leadership. Ask if your local afterschool program is part of your school building leadership team or part of the district's improvement plan. ESSA asks that schools consult with stakeholders—that includes afterschool.

Weigh in on 21st CCLC. Included in ESSA is funding for 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) programs. These afterschool programs focus on academic success, high quality youth development activities and parent engagement. If your school has a 21st CCLC program it should be part of your building or district leadership team and included in your district's improvement plan.

If you have questions, need additional support or want to share feedback, please contact Nichelle Harris:
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CONTACT INFORMATION

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