

February, 2021

Supporting Thriving Students in the Michigan State Budget: Afterschool and Summer Learning

Michigan's children will be our next scientists, entrepreneurs, teachers, parents, laborers, artists and lawmakers, but our K-12 results are not meeting the outcomes we need. When low-income children reach 6th grade, they have spent 6,000 fewer hours learning, resulting in gaps in their academic success. By the third grade, white students are well above their peers of color in reading, and high school dropout rates remain higher for Black, Hispanic and American Indian students, and students facing life challenges like poverty, disability, foster care, or homelessness.

Afterschool and summer learning programs offer students well-rounded opportunities to: build and retain literacy and STEM skills, stay on-track in school, and discover post-secondary possibilities. They also strengthen working families by keeping kids safe during working hours. The interpersonal skills and behaviors learned in these programs help children and youth build connections and rebuild from earlier trauma. Throughout this pandemic, these programs have been essential supports for families. Many have operated throughout the pandemic at serious loss, and many more programs are needed for the summer to make up for learning delays and ensure children are safe and connecting with peers and trusted adults while their families work.

There has been no dedicated state funding for afterschool since 2011, creating enormous gaps in access to quality programs across the state. Prior to the pandemic, half of all qualified applicants for federal funding missed out due to limited program funds, which have shrunk steadily due to the federal grant's allocation formula.

The Michigan After-School Partnership identified a need of \$15 million for immediate program relief and \$120 million to provide summer programs for students who need them for the next two summers. For programs to begin preparing for summer by hiring and training staff, it is essential that a FY21 supplemental budget is passed immediately.

Current Situation: The Governor's budget includes \$6 million for program relief, as well as \$60 million for summer learning programs for FY21 and \$60 million for FY22. The House's proposed budget includes \$18 million overall for these programs.

Recommendations

- **Urge House and Senate leaders to immediately pass \$15 million in direct relief to high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs that have served children and youth during the pandemic, and \$120 million for program expansion for FY21 and FY22.**