

November, 2021

Supporting Thriving Students in Michigan: Afterschool and Summer Learning

The case for \$100 million to expand access to out-of-school time learning programs statewide

Michigan's lawmakers will soon begin making decisions on priorities for spending over \$6 billion in unspent ARPA funds and approximately \$2.8 billion in unspent state revenues in a supplemental budget for the 2021-22 Fiscal Year. One key area of concern is in supporting students and their families in recovering from effects of unfinished learning and learning loss. Likely Michigan voters of every political persuasion across our state's diverse regions agree that [supporting students is a top priority for public investment](#).

Students not only deserve increased investment for in-school educational and wraparound supports, they also deserve high-quality out-of-school-time learning opportunities (OST). OST programs are proven to help children and youth build critical life skills and academic skills; stay on-track in school; discover post-secondary and career possibilities; and receive well-rounded nutrition. They also strengthen working families by keeping kids safe in the hours before and after school and over the summer. And while 81% of voters support afterschool opportunities, enormous gaps in access to quality programs across the state. [Recent analysis](#) identifies that for every program in Michigan, there are 376 students who need access.

Michigan's Children supports dedicating \$100 million, administered through an inter-agency Out-of-School-Time (OST) Council, for:

1. 3-year grants to start-up and re-open programs in areas with community need;
2. Expand existing programs to serve more youth over the next three years;
3. Strengthen the OST workforce through wage increases, professional development and quality enhancement of the field; and
4. Encourage partnerships between school districts and community-based organizations.

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. By the time poor children are in the 6th grade, they have spent 6,000 fewer hours learning, resulting in gaps in their academic success. By the 3rd grade, racial and other disparities already exist 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. A multi-year, \$100 million investment will build lasting access to OST programs for students to further their the academic and social-emotional skills, and the workforce and college readiness.