

## Afterschool Stimulus Funding Priorities Survey Results

The Network conducted a survey in March 2021 to gather input from the afterschool field on what the Network should prioritize in its recommendations to the state and other relevant stakeholders in the utilization of federal stimulus funds to support afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs in New York.

The American Rescue Plan, recently signed into law by President Biden, includes an influx of funding to the afterschool field to address learning loss. New York is expected to receive \$9 billion in education with \$2.2 billion to specifically address learning loss over the next two years.

### Demographic Information

**Economic Regions Represented:** All represented except the North Country. The highest representation was from Western NY at 26.5% followed by NYC at 23.5%.

| Location of NY afterschool programs, federal funding survey |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Economic Region   | Percentage of Responses |
| Western New York  | 26.5%                   |
| NYC   | 23.5%                   |
| Finger Lakes  | 19.1%                   |
| Capital District  | 10.3%                   |
| Central New York  | 5.9%                    |
| Mid Hudson  | 5.9%                    |
| Mohawk Valley   | 2.9%                    |
| Southern Tier   | 2.9%                    |
| Long Island   | 2.9%                    |
| North Country   | 0.0%                    |

**Number of Programs represented by respondents: 358**

| Types of Programs Represented in Survey around Federal Afterschool Funding (2021) |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Type of Program   | Percent of Responses |
| year-round program (including afterschool and summer programming)                 | 39.2%                |
| afterschool program only  | 23.0%                |
| school-day program (happens during school hours)                                  | 18.9%                |
| summer program only   | 17.6%                |
| other   | 1.4%                 |

**Type of Program Represented:** Most respondents ran programs that are year-round, including afterschool and summer programming.

| Type of programs represented in afterschool federal funds survey (2021) |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Type of Program   | Percentage of Responses |
| Run by community-based organization                                     | 62.5%                   |
| Run by a public school or school district                               | 12.5%                   |
| YMCA  | 12.5%                   |
| Run by Faith-based organization   | 4.2%                    |
| Other   | 8.3%                    |

Most programs surveyed are run by a community-based organization (CBO)

**Programming During COVID-19:** As of March 2021, most programs were physically open and offering virtual programming to their communities. 66.7% of programs were physically open in some capacity. A margin of 47.9% of respondents transitioned to full-day programming to serve the needs of their community during COVID-19.

| Did your afterschool program transition to full-day programming over the last 12 months (3/2021)? |       |
|---|-------|
| Yes   | 47.9% |
| No  | 43.8% |
| N/A   | 8.3%  |

| Current State of NY afterschool programs, 3/2021                               |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Status   | Percent of Respondents |
| physically open and also offering virtual programming to students and families | 43.8%                  |
| physically open in at least some capacity                                      | 22.9%                  |
| completely closed; no in-person or virtual services being offered              | 14.6%                  |
| physically closed, but offering virtual programming for students and families  | 14.6%                  |
| physically closed, but delivering or offering new services for students and    | 2.1%                   |
| N/A  | 2.1%                   |

**Question 6. Factors significant to afterschool programming as of 3/21**

When asked about factors that are significantly important to afterschool, summer, and expanded learning program(s) at this time, all response options had over 50% of the respondents indicating that they were a priority. The following were the top 4 factors respondents said was significantly important to their programs: majority of respondents:

- New funding sources/money to operate afterschool programs
- New funding sources/money to operate summer programs
- Funding to support reopening of afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs
- Funding to support staff training and professional development

| <b>Factor</b>  | <b>% of respondents = Yes</b> | <b>% of respondents = No</b> | <b>% of respondents = N/A</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>New funding sources/money to operate afterschool programs</b>                           | 81.3%                         | 10.4%                        | 8.3%                          |
| <b>New funding/money to operate summer programs</b>  | 79.2%                         | 16.7%                        | 4.2%                          |
| <b>Funding to support reopening of afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs</b> | 79.2%                         | 12.5%                        | 8.3%                          |
| <b>Funding to support staff training and professional development</b>                      | 79.2%                         | 20.8%                        | 0%                            |
| <b>Increasing staff wages and benefits</b>   | 73.5%                         | 18.4%                        | 8.2%                          |
| <b>Guidance/more information on utilizing existing afterschool funds</b>                   | 71.4%                         | 20.4%                        | 8.2%                          |
| <b>Paying for protective equipment and</b>   | 69.4%                         | 24.5%                        | 6.1%                          |

|   |       |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>cleaning supplies</b>  |       |       |       |
| <b>Availability of physical space to offer programming while meeting public health procedures</b>   | 66.7% | 27.1% | 6.3%  |
| <b>Meeting the needs of families who need afterschool programs for longer periods of time due to schools' mix of virtual and in-person teaching</b> | 66.7% | 25%   | 8.3%  |
| <b>Guidance and resources to protect health and safety of staff and students</b>  | 65.3% | 28.6% | 6.1%  |
| <b>More online resources/more student access to technology</b>  | 58%   | 24%   | 18%   |
| <b>Guidance on how to work with school districts and/or local schools regarding schedules and programs</b>  | 56%   | 32%   | 12%   |
| <b>On-time payments and execution of state afterschool contracts</b>  | 51.1% | 20.4% | 22.4% |

**6a. Expansion on Significant Factors:** (See [appendix 1](#) for direct qualitative responses.)

Respondents said funding would help programs meet expenses to provide a high-quality program and pay for staff salaries and mentioned the need for funding to reflect operating costs. Respondents also shared the need to enhance capacity for the field through professional development to effectively meet the social emotional needs of youth, and present accountability measures and guidance to ensure that these new funds are effectively executed.

**7. Top 3 Priorities for the Stimulus**

The responses that were indicated as the top three priorities by a majority of respondents were:

- Grants to expand afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs
- Stabilization grants to support and enhance operations
- Funding to expand afterschool workforce and development

| <b>Top Priorities for Afterschool Programs for Federal Funding, 2021</b>                               |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Priorities</b>  | <b>Percentage of Responses</b> |
| Grants to expand afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs                                   | 81.3%                          |
| Stabilization grants to support and enhance operations   | 60.4%                          |
| Funding to expand afterschool workforce and development  | 50.0%                          |
| Workforce supplemental wages for afterschool professionals   | 37.5%                          |
| Allowance for afterschool grantees to claim full reimbursement in original proposals for state funding | 29.2%                          |
| Funding to support data collection, research, and evaluation   | 10.4%                          |

**7a. Other priorities the State should consider for the use of federal stimulus funds to support afterschool, summer, and other expanded learning programs.**

(See [appendix 2](#) for direct qualitative responses.)

Respondents shared that supports should be provided for programs that expand their programs to provide comprehensive services to youth, including funding for food services and support for basic necessities of youth they serve, and also for programs that have seen losses in revenue. Respondents also mentioned that parents should be included as strategic accountability and thought partners in efforts to address learning loss. Respondents also reiterated the need to address administrative and structural challenges to programs such as issues with administrative vs. programmatic

costs, timely payments and reimbursement for afterschool providers utilizing afterschool funds and other funds like CARES, and collaboration and communication among state agencies. Other priorities shared included a prioritization of efforts to support youth most impacted by COVID-19; connections to local school structures and alignment of schools' priorities to foster school-community support, and increased wages to increase retention of staff.

## **Appendix 1. Expansion on significant factors**

- **New funding sources/money to operate afterschool programs**
  - Funding sources that allow for true operation costs, including administrative, Human Resources, IT – not just the payroll of staff working with the children.
  - I need to find funding to keep our expanded day programs including distance learning and our expanded Youth Center Hours.
  - We have lost local funding as a result of the pandemic. We have a five-year contract with OCFS for our Advantage After School program which we may have to terminate because the contract does not support indirect costs such as required accounting and auditing services and some insurances which cost us \$12,000 per year. These had been supported by local funding but now we cannot meet these expenses.
  - Afterschool college and workforce readiness opportunities are critically important to today's youth, especially in supporting their transition to adulthood during such a tumultuous time and the hybrid/physical model.
  - The lack of staff and increase in expenses has been extremely challenging.
  - Our biggest concern at the current moment is effectively staffing for the extended hours that we are working in the office
  - Increased funding will allow us to sustainably provide the program at a high-quality. We currently rely largely on private donor funds and have seen funding cuts in recent years which has impacted the size of our program. Additionally, in the wake of COVID, ratios of staffing may become an issue to ensure that we are able to adequately social distance children we may need more staffing and therefore expenses will increase significantly.
- **New funding/money to operate summer programs**
  - We could serve more rising kindergartens this summer if funding were available
- **Funding to support staff training and professional development**
  - Funding needed for staff development... to reassure staff about safety concerns and make it worthwhile to return to work
  - Continued training and professional development for staff is essential to furthering the capacity to effectively meet socioemotional needs of youth and rise to the demands of implementing anti-racist programming and promoting a positive culture around DEI.
  - Conversation around elevating the field and creating capacity for field
- **Increasing staff wages and benefits**
  - Funding needed for... staff salaries to reassure staff about safety concerns and make it worthwhile to return to work
- **Guidance/more information on utilizing afterschool funds**
  - Guidance on evidence based programs to comply with ARP

- More education on how to get funding to open locations or support current programs.
- **Availability of physical space to offer programming while meeting public health procedures**
  - We have expanded our approved program space, but it is still challenging to maintain social distancing requirements.
- **Meeting the needs of families who need afterschool programs for longer periods of time due to schools' mix of virtual and in-person teaching**
  - Right now we are supporting our community however we are able. This means offering more financial assistance to help cover full day child care costs for families that were not anticipating paying (or cannot afford) full day child care.
- **On-time payments and execution of state afterschool contracts**
  - We first would like to be paid by Advantage.
  - Funding that comes in a much more timely manner to allow it to be truly beneficial. Assurance that it will not be a repeat of CARES funding.
- **Other**
  - It is important that accountability is in place.
  - As we are a small community-based 501c3 offering afterschool programming that is predominantly funded by grants, and day programming funded by the public school through Title 1 funds, we are not adequately alerted and included in federal and state funding opportunities.
  - Our biggest concern is having guidance on how OCFS is responding to the school re-opening procedures and how that will affect childcare centers.
  - Encouraging the local school districts to use funding to partner with outside providers previously involved with services.
  - Flexibility in our contracts are also big priorities. Our needs also depend on the needs of our community.
  - Timely proactive communication and flexibility in resources
  - Movement away from daily attendance rate.
  - We had a fire and are working on running a full program that includes the whole family.

**Appendix 2.** Other priorities should the State consider for the use of federal stimulus funds to support afterschool, summer, and other expanded learning programs.

- Professional development for Technical Assistance Centers and other COVID-19 impacts on children and youth.
- To support facilities that expanded their programming to assist youth most in need of technical, educational, social, nutritional, and emotional support.
- Direct reimbursement to programs for scholarship of eligible children to cover their fees directly. Current process through CARES3 is extremely slow and requires parents to pay immediately regardless of if they have the resources to do so.
- Special attention needs to be placed on communities most impacted by the pandemic to include the Latinx and Black Communities.

- Timely payments and reimbursement for afterschool grantees
- Increasing per pupil allocation for Pre-K, Empire and 21st Century Programs
- Allowance for afterschool grantees to claim full reimbursement in original proposals for Federal pass-through funding (TANF) - reconsider restrictions on programmatic costs vs. administrative costs. Be consistent with federal guidance.
- Train the Parent Associations and let those who receive governmental funding be afforded the opportunity to participate in professional development opportunities. Parent Alliance, parent voice, parent leadership.
- Grant Payments should be made on time with no reductions. Increase the afterschool funding amounts.
- Small not-for-profits which serve their communities and evidence strong outcomes (measured through robust data collection and evaluation plans already in place), may not be connected with local school structures. How can support be best aligned to maintain these independent and vital organizations?
- Indoor facilities
- Having the State Education Department and OCFS collaborate.
- Funding for programs to cover increased supply costs (student and program supplies), increased hourly rates to staff members, and to support the financial assistance that many organizations are providing families that may not otherwise have access to childcare programs.
- Continuing to support programs that have had losses in revenue based on diminished capacity and lack of staff.
- Grants to increase pay to workers to increase retention of staff.
- Funding for summer programming to assist families with childcare and to provide enriching programs for children.
- Funding to provide food services during programs.
- Funds to invest in technology expansion, funds for resources for families including food and other items to meet basic needs, mental health resources.
- Expand building
- Creating Parent Leadership Accountability for School Districts with the community (including faith-based).