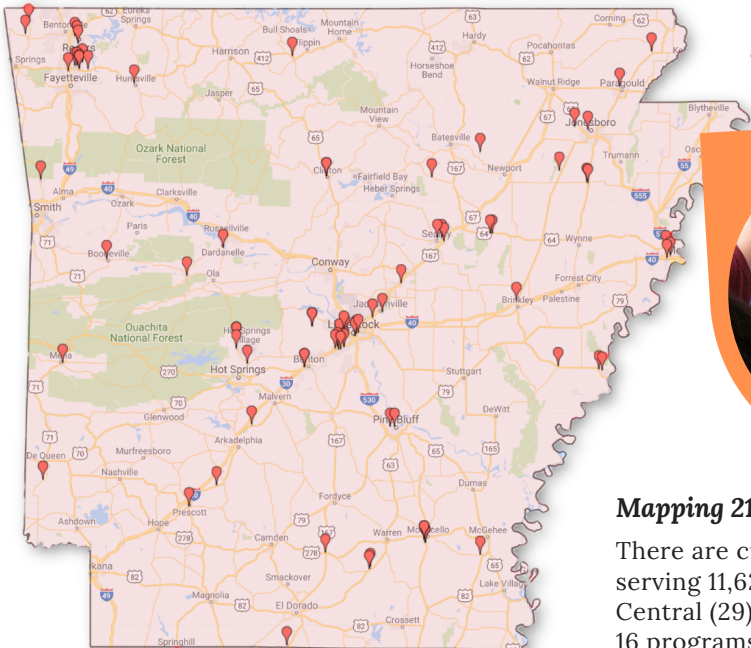
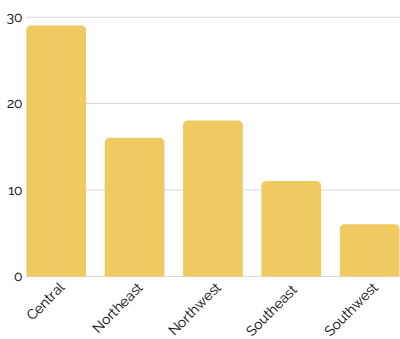


OUR CURRENT STATE

Arkansas Needs More Afterschool. 21st Century Community Learning Center grants are the only dedicated source of support for local communities’ afterschool and summer programs. Demand for programs is so great that 3 out of every 4 applications cannot be funded.



An estimated 65,107 Arkansas children participate in an afterschool program. 190,563 would enroll in a program if one were available.



Mapping 21CCLC in Arkansas

There are currently 80 21CCLC programs funded in the state of Arkansas serving 11,628 youth. A majority of programs are currently located in the Central (29) and Northwest (18) regions. Pulaski County is currently home to 16 programs, the largest number per county in the state. Under the current funding model, many rural communities and those with the highest poverty levels are left underserved.

Afterschool in Arkansas

According to a recent mapping survey conducted by the Arkansas Out of School Network, there are currently 288 quality-rated school-age afterschool and summer learning programs across the state. A majority of programs are currently located in the Central (101) and Northwest (112) regions. That means that 74 percent of quality-rated afterschool and summer learning programs are concentrated in the Northwest and Central regions of the state, while students in the more rural parts of Arkansas often lack access to positive development opportunities. Southwest Arkansas and the Delta regions, which have the highest poverty levels in the state, have the most limited access to afterschool and summer programs with a combined total of 25 programs..

Afterschool provides a solid return on investment. Research shows that every \$1 invested in afterschool programs saves at least \$3 by



- Increasing kids’ learning potential
- Improving kids’ performance at school
- Reducing crime and juvenile delinquency

Why Afterschool?

Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give working parents peace of mind. They help children learn, grow, and reach their full potential, offering new learning opportunities that help students do better in school and in life. Children in afterschool programs attend school more often, get better grades, and are more likely to graduate. They are less likely to use drugs or alcohol. In fact, 83 percent of Arkansas parents with a child in an afterschool program say that programs can help reduce the likelihood that kids will commit a crime, use drugs or become a teen parent.

We also know that afterschool and summer learning programs are a key resource to helping young people develop valuable 21st century workforce skills, explore career options and gain confidence for the future. With the state unemployment rate currently at 3.8 percent, these programs can also serve as a valuable tool for employers who are looking to bridge the current skills gap and strengthen the workforce of tomorrow.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND AFTERSCHOOL

Working together for a better tomorrow.

Workforce is the greatest challenge currently facing Arkansas companies and the greatest growth inhibitor. According to the state chamber of commerce, there is an estimated 36,000 jobs currently available. Arkansas's top industries are agriculture, tourism and manufacturing while the fastest-growing industries are healthcare and information technology.

How can afterschool support workforce development?

Afterschool and summer learning programs are a vital resource for employers. They provide young people with a safe, positive environment during the summer months and from 3-6 pm, the time in which statistically juvenile crime peaks, enabling more young people to enter the workplace. Afterschool and summer learning programs are also proven to boost school attendance and close the achievement gap. They help build confidence and important social-emotional skills in young people. Afterschool and summer learning programs also provide unique opportunities for individualized career exploration through job shadowing, apprenticeships and hands-on learning activities like coding and robotics. They also teach desired 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, teamwork and leadership.

WORKFORCE AFTER SCHOOL EXAMPLES



Camp War Eagle - The Amazing Shake Bentonville, AR

Each year Camp War Eagle, in partnership with the local business community, hosts a competition for its 2nd-5th grade students that supports foundational skills. The goal: to prepare students for the workforce by putting them in real world situations. Students participate in public speaking exercises, submit a resume, sit through a real job interview process and role play workplace scenarios. The winner of the competition receives a scholarship to be placed in a savings account, while the top six win a trip to the national competition in Atlanta.



TekStarz

Jonesboro, AR

Each summer the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce hosts a summer camp for 8th graders that allows them to explore careers in the manufacturing sector. Students engage with engineers, scientists, industrial mechanics and plant managers on site in hands-on projects that help them learn about various career opportunities and the local economy. The camp even includes a showcase where families can interact with representatives from the participating companies. Congressman Rick Crawford also hosts an annual manufacturing tour in the region, which brings teachers and local industry together to discuss workforce needs.



Boys and Girls Club of Saline County - Benton, AR

The Boys and Girls Club of Saline County believes their program is a place to belong, to grow, learn and become your greatest self. Part of achieving that goal is preparing students for life after high school. One way the program is promoting individualized career readiness by allowing students to shadow local business leaders and interview them about their chosen careers. In this case, "Sam" shadowed a local engineer who walked them through their operation, discussed different engineering fields, the benefits of the profession and how to become an engineer.

