

# EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Expanded learning opportunities – afterschool, weekend, or summer programming for school-age students – promote academic achievement, leadership skills, and involve youth in their communities. Unfortunately, youth from low income families get the least exposure to family reading time, weekend day trips, preschool, summer camp, and afterschool programming, compared to their peers from non-low income households.<sup>1</sup> It adds up to a 6,000 hour learning gap by 6<sup>th</sup> grade – and only gets wider as they enter junior high and high school.<sup>2</sup> This learning gap has an impact on school attendance and performance, as well as students’ opportunity to be fully prepared for college or career. Ability to access afterschool and summer school programs also impacts student safety, because the hours between 3 and 6pm are those in which youth are most susceptible to risky or adverse behaviors.<sup>3</sup>

Afterschool and summer learning programs help keep kids safe and cultivate student success. High quality afterschool programs have been proven to decrease criminal or risky behaviors and aggression, while improving social skills and self-confidence.<sup>4</sup> Especially for older youth, participation in afterschool programs increases their school attendance and graduation rates.<sup>5</sup>



## LOOKING AHEAD

Our state can keep our kids safer and improve educational outcomes by investing in the infrastructure essential for ensuring that all our kids can access and benefit from high quality afterschool and summer learning programs by:

- Investing an additional \$2M in the Expanded Learning Opportunities Quality Initiative to increase the number of youth who can be served by high-quality programs, and provide resources and support to programs working with youth in foster care, homeless youth, or those who have interacted with the juvenile justice system;
- Creating a strategic workgroup run by the Department of Children, Youth, & Families (DCYF) that pulls together youth, providers, OSPI, DCYF, chambers of commerce, and parents to develop a prevention and promotion strategy;
- In partnership with the Career Connect Washington Initiative and the OSPI Work-Integrated Advisory Committee, investing additional funding for afterschool and summer learning opportunities that provide career and work-based exploration and pathway opportunities for middle school and high school students.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.expandedschools.org/the-learning-gap#sthash.mNw4jhXx.dpbs>;

<sup>2</sup> Wimer, Christopher, Bouffard, S.M., Caronongan, P., Dearing, E., Simpkins, S., Little, P., & Weiss, H. (2006). What are kids getting into these days?: Demographic differences in youth out-of school time participation. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

<sup>3</sup> Vandell, D. L., Reisner, E. R., & Pierce, K. M. (2007). Outcomes Linked to High-Quality After-school Programs: Longitudinal Findings from the Study of Promising Afterschool Programs. Report to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Eaton, D.K., et. al. (2012). "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance – United States, 2011." Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). Division of Adolescent and School Health, National

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<sup>4</sup> Goldschmidt, P. and Huang, D., The Long-Term Effects of After-School Programming on Educational Adjustment and Juvenile Crime: A Study of the LA's BEST After-School Program, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), 2007. Huang, D. and Wang, J. Independent Statewide Evaluation of High School After School Programs. National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, Center for the Study of

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<sup>5</sup> Goerge, R., Cusick, G. R., Wasserman, M., & Gladden, R. M. Chapin Hall, Center for Children at the University of Chicago. After-School Programs and Academic Impact: A Study of Chicago's After School Matters