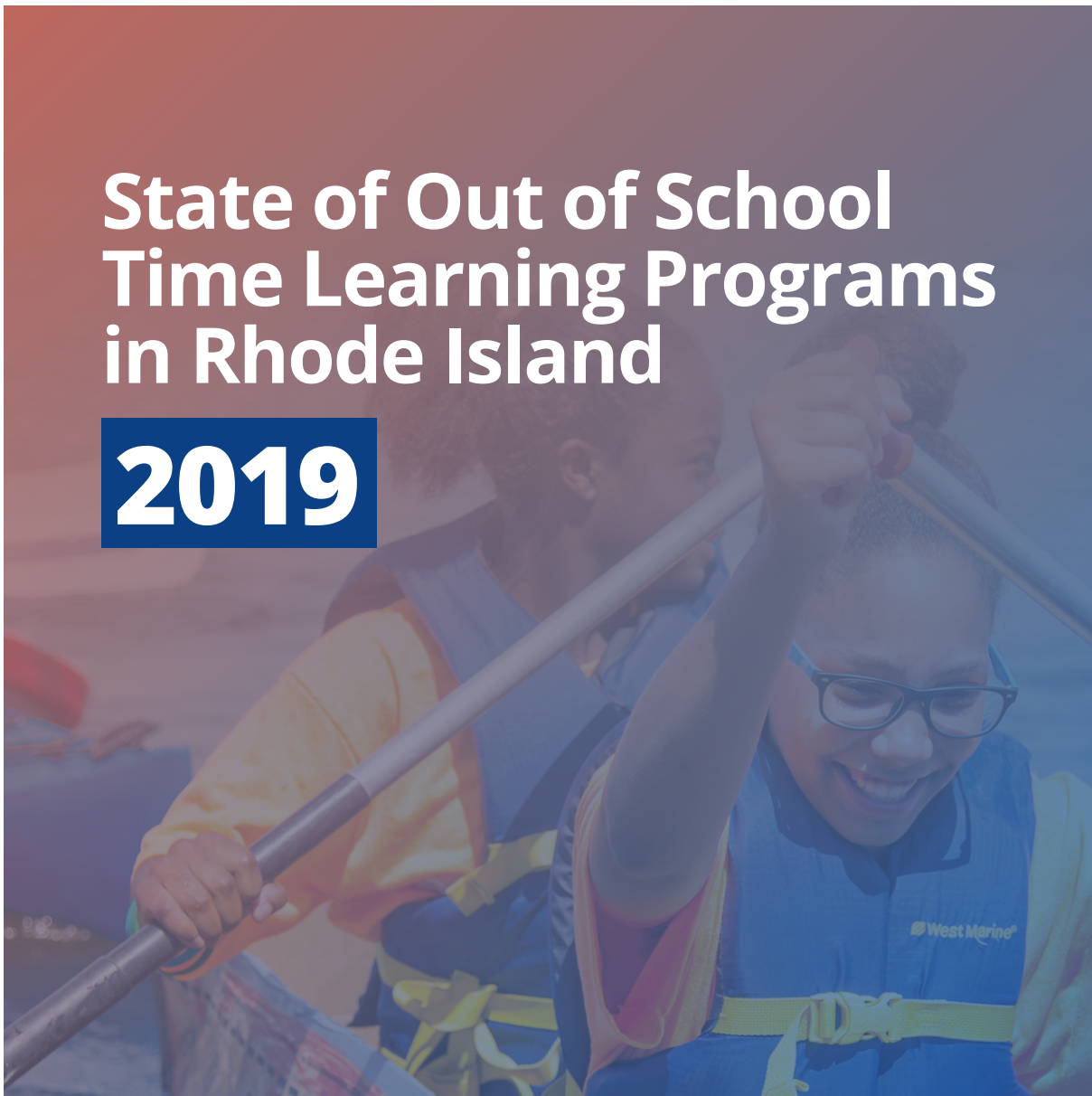


# State of Out of School Time Learning Programs in Rhode Island

**2019**



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United Way of Rhode Island

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# LETTER FROM THE RHODE ISLAND AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

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Colleagues:

We, the members of the Rhode Island Afterschool Network (RIAN) Executive Committee, are pleased to present to you this report, which provides an overview and highlights of the landscape of Out of School Time (OST) programs in Rhode Island. Over the past year, we have convened as a group, engaged stakeholders, examined existing data, testified before the Out of School Time Learning Commission, and collected stories to learn and paint a picture of the importance, and strengths, of OST programs. We have also identified needs and opportunities to strengthen and increase access to these invaluable programs, increase recruitment and retention in the OST workforce, and note areas for further local data collection.

As a result of this process, several themes have emerged that are highlighted in this report. The benefit of engaging our children in structured, high-quality educational activities outside of school hours cannot be overstated. Individual impact - educational and developmental research demonstrates, and parents, teachers, childcare providers agree to the importance of OST programs for promoting educational success, social and emotional learning, and racial equity for our youth. Family impact - OST programs also support financial stability by allowing parents to remain productive and at work through the end of the business day. Statewide impact - there is an opportunity to advance Rhode Island's educational goals by supporting and investing in OST programs, and elevating and embedding oversight of OST programming within the Rhode Island Department of Education, similar to our peers in Massachusetts and California.

The time is now to invest in our youth both during and outside of formal school hours, and to ensure equitable access to these transformative resources. We are grateful for the opportunity to present to you this environmental scan and blueprint for moving forward. Investing in and providing access to high quality OST programs will position our children to be successful in present educational activities, and future professional aspirations. We owe them nothing less; and welcome your partnership in safeguarding the future of all of Rhode Island's children.

*Respectfully,*

Members of the Executive Committee of the Rhode Island Afterschool Network

# 01

## THE SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON OUT OF SCHOOL TIME LEARNING

"The evidence is overwhelmingly clear that learning and development of our students should not be limited to just school hours and I am looking forward to bringing this discussion to Rhode Island."

Representative Julie A. Casimiro <sup>1</sup>



## The Out of School Time Learning Commission

The Executive Committee of the Rhode Island Afterschool Network presents this report to the Special Legislative Commission on Out of School Time Learning, also referred to as the Out of School Time Learning Commission. It is a 13-member commission created to make recommendations to improve and increase the number of high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs in Rhode Island.

Representative Julie A. Casimiro's 'Out of School Time Learning Commission' legislation (2018-H 7413A) passed the Rhode Island House of Representatives on May 29, 2018.

## The Out of School Time Learning Commission Members

Rep. Julie A. Casimiro  
*Chair*

Frank Flynn  
*American Federation of Teachers*

Kate Messier  
*YMCA of Greater Providence*

Rep. Susan R. Donovan  
*Vice Chair*

James Hoyt  
*Boys & Girls Club of Pawtucket*

Hillary Salmons  
*Providence After School Alliance*

Andy Andrade  
*Rhode Island Department of  
Education (RIDE)*

Danielle Margarida  
*Rhode Island Office of Library and  
Information Services*

Robert Walsh  
*National Education Association Rhode  
Island*

Terese Curtin  
*Rhode Island Partnership for  
Community Schools/COZ*

Dr. Corinne McKamey  
*Rhode Island College, Feinstein  
School of Education and Human  
Development*

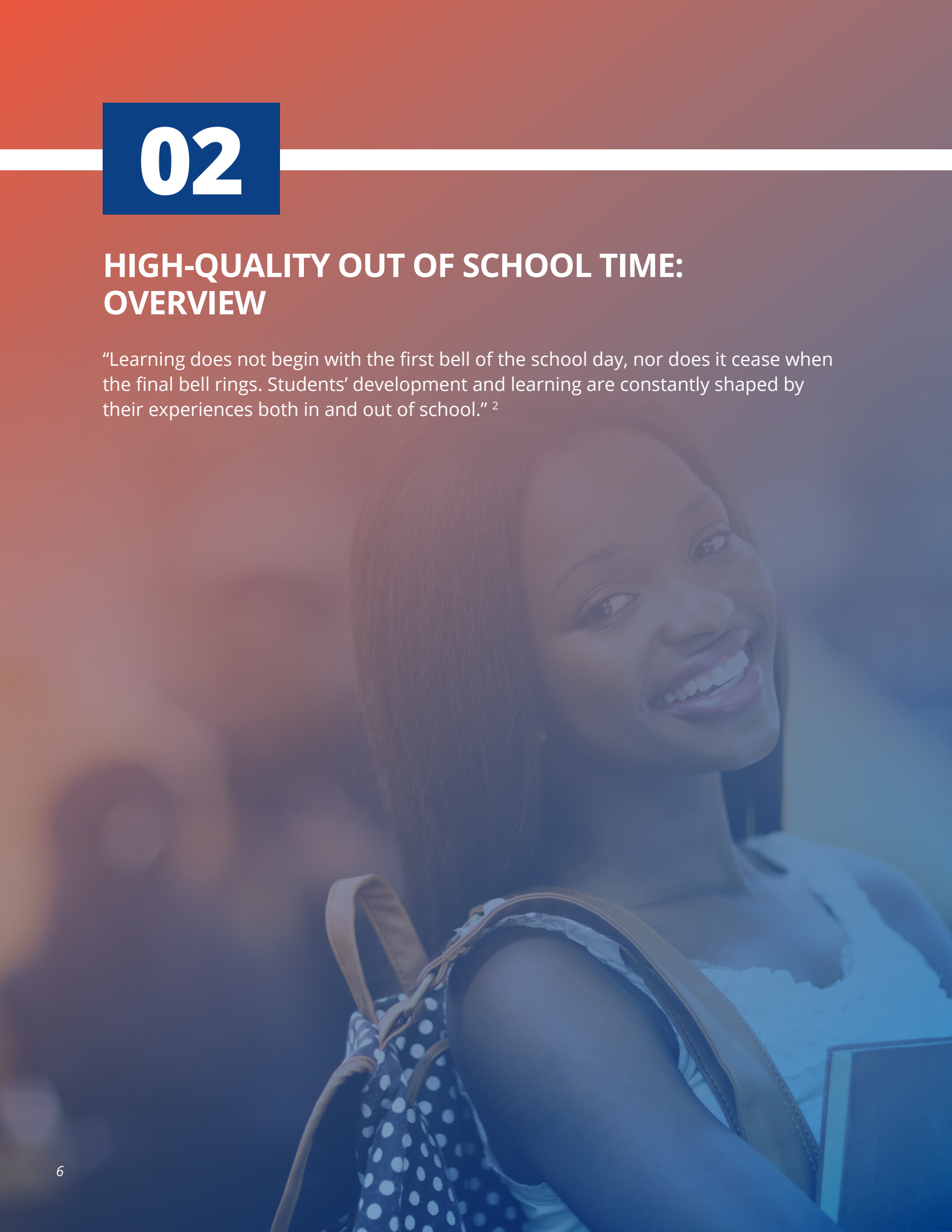
Travis Escobar  
*United Way of Rhode Island*



# 02

## HIGH-QUALITY OUT OF SCHOOL TIME: OVERVIEW

“Learning does not begin with the first bell of the school day, nor does it cease when the final bell rings. Students’ development and learning are constantly shaped by their experiences both in and out of school.”<sup>2</sup>



## What is Out of School Time?

Out of School Time (OST) refers to supervised programs that youth ages five to 18 regularly attend when school is not in session. Programs take place before and after school and during the summer and school vacations. OST programs may incorporate a focus on academics, athletics, enrichment, and skill development.<sup>3</sup> In Rhode Island, OST program locations include schools, private or non-profit community organizations, faith-based organizations, early childhood centers, recreation centers, libraries, and more.

Youth between the ages six to 18 spend 80 percent of their time outside of school.<sup>4</sup> What they do during this time matters. When youth are consistently engaged in high-quality OST programs, they are more likely to succeed in school and demonstrate improvement in behavior, attendance, and health. Communities and

families prosper when youth have safe and engaging ways to spend their time when their parents or caregivers are at work.<sup>5</sup>

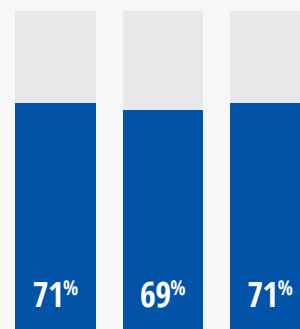
The 2017 RAND study *The Value of Out of School Time Programs* asserts “quality OST programs are intentionally designed to provide engaging activities that are sequenced and aligned with program goals and are taught by trained, dedicated instructors who work effectively with youth.”<sup>6</sup>

All young people deserve a chance to succeed in school and career, in order to build meaningful and engaging lives. High-quality OST, therefore, is an essential thread, connecting youth to the skills, habits, and layers of support they need to recognize their potential and develop for a future of promise.

## Rhode Island Parents Support High-Quality Out of School Time

OST programs provide valuable, safe, and structured activities between the hours of 3 to 6 p.m., when one in five children is unsupervised while their parents or caregivers work. Parents indicate that afterschool programs give them peace of mind by ensuring that their children are in a safe, supportive place, allowing them to focus on being productive at their jobs—and being able to keep them.<sup>7</sup> Rhode Island parents want the State to provide financial support to programs that they rely on for their economic well-being and family support. Seventy-one percent of Rhode Island parents support public funding for afterschool programs.<sup>8</sup> Of Rhode Island parents who have a child currently enrolled in an OST program, 90% report satisfaction with their child’s program.<sup>9</sup>

Rhode Island parents strongly support afterschool:



**71%** support funding for after-school<sup>10</sup>

**69%** say afterschool helps them keep their jobs<sup>10</sup>

**71%** say afterschool reduces the likelihood that kids will engage in risky behavior<sup>10</sup>

## High-Quality Out of School Time Supports Rhode Island’s Education Goals

“A Rhode Island graduate is one who is well prepared for postsecondary education, work, and life. He or she can think critically and collaboratively and can act as a creative, self-motivated, culturally competent learner and citizen.”<sup>11</sup>

High-quality OST programs serve as a key factor in ensuring that we can realize the 2020 Vision for Education in Rhode Island, Rhode Island’s strategic plan for PK-12 education. The plan aims to create a statewide educational system where students have access to personalized and flexible learning experiences aligned to rigorous academic and 21st century skills that prepare them for college, career, and life.<sup>12</sup>

These are the very characteristics that OST programs specialize in. According to The National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development, “Youth development organizations, businesses, libraries,

museums, civic and social groups, and faith-based groups are critical . . . partners. They can play an essential role in galvanizing community commitment to integrating social, emotional, and academic development across learning settings, from the periphery to the mainstream of American education.”<sup>13</sup>

When youth regularly attend high-quality OST programs, they are able to narrow gaps in math achievement, improve their academic and behavior outcomes, and have fewer school absences.<sup>14</sup> OST programs enable students to apply their academic learning to the real world, recognize their potential, and gain the skills they need succeed in their careers.<sup>15</sup>





## High Quality Out of School Time Prepares Youth for the Workplace

“When children and youth possess a full array of social, emotional, and cognitive skills, habits of mind, and character, they are best equipped to prosper in the classroom, perform in the workplace, and succeed in life as contributing and productive members of society.”<sup>22</sup>

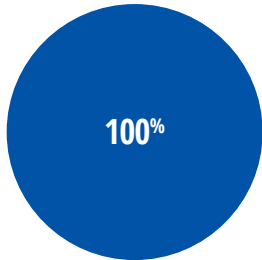
OST programs in Rhode Island play an essential role in preparing youth for meaningful and sustainable work opportunities. Eight in ten employers say social and emotional skills are the most important markers of career success, and yet are also the hardest skills to find in potential employees.<sup>23</sup> Employers recognize that it does not matter how much content knowledge workers have if they are unable to work well in teams, communicate clearly, and persevere when confronted with complex problems.<sup>24</sup> According to a national survey released by Achieve, approximately 50 percent of recent high school graduates reported that they did not feel prepared for life after high school.<sup>25</sup> OST programs provide Rhode Island youth with the skills they need to succeed in the workplace, and teach them workplace habits they may not be learning during the school day.

Since 2016, Rhode Island students in grades 6-12 in participating public school districts have been able to enroll in credit-bearing courses not normally available at their own school through the Rhode Island Department of Education’s (RIDE) Advanced Coursework Network (ACN).<sup>26</sup> The ACN includes four categories of courses: Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, Career Credentials and Work-Based Learning. Many of these classes are offered during OST and are supported by a mix of course providers at Rhode Island school/districts, colleges, community-based organizations, and Department of Labor and Training.<sup>27</sup> In the 2017-2018 school year, 706 students

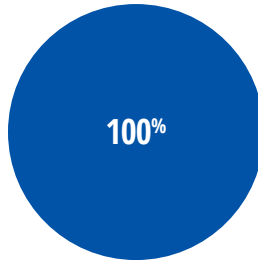
enrolled in classes in the Advanced Coursework Network. Out of the 74 percent of public high schools in Rhode Island participating in the ACN, 83 percent of the enrollments were from schools serving urban districts and 18 percent of the enrollments were from schools identified as persistently low-achieving. Students earned 1,430 college credits and 596 high school credits.<sup>28</sup>



## Spotlight: Community-Based Organizations Serving High School Students in Rhode Island and Their Impact on High School Graduation Rates and/or College Acceptance Rates



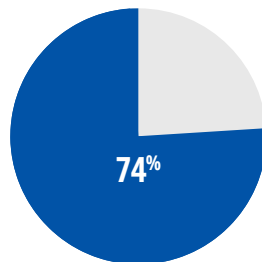
**100%** of CV students graduate from high school<sup>16</sup>



**100%** of CV students earn a college admissions acceptance<sup>16</sup>

### College Visions:

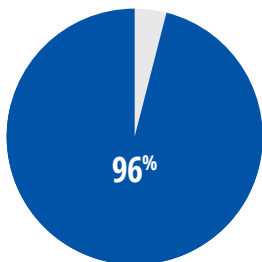
**Mission:** To empower low-income and first-generation college-bound students to realize the promise of higher education by providing advising and resources to promote college enrollment, persistence, and graduation.



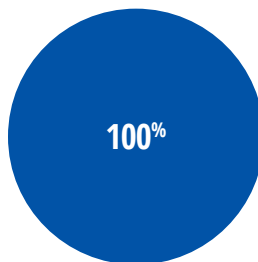
**74%** college entrance rate<sup>17</sup>

### New Urban Arts:

**Mission:** To build a vital community that empowers young people as artists and leaders to develop a creative practice they can sustain throughout their lives.



**96%** of students in Expanded Learning Opportunities Program graduated from high school<sup>18</sup>



**100%** of students in Arts and Business Program graduated from high school<sup>18</sup>

### Riverzedge Arts:

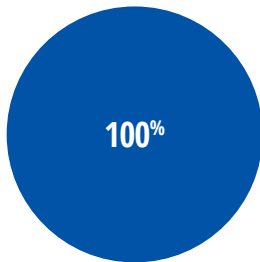
**Mission:** To improve lives and places through art, design, and creative problem solving.

*(based on 2016 data)*

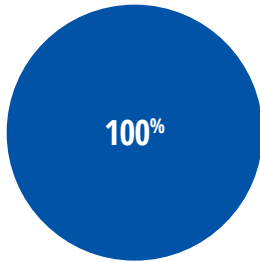
## Young Voices:

**Mission:** Young Voices transforms urban youth into powerful advocates who have a voice in every aspect of their lives.

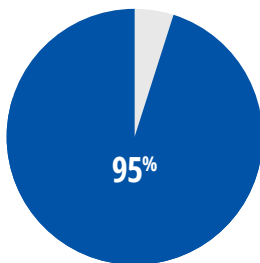
*(based on data from 2008-2019)*



100% graduate high school<sup>19</sup>



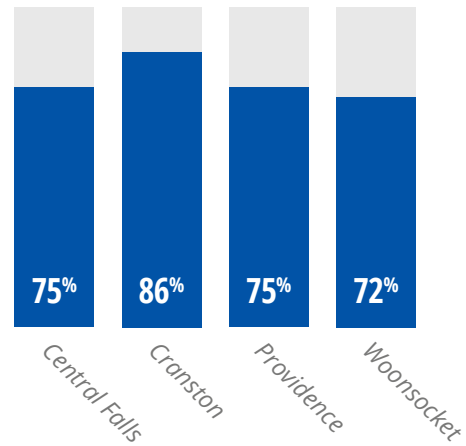
100% students accepted into college<sup>19</sup>



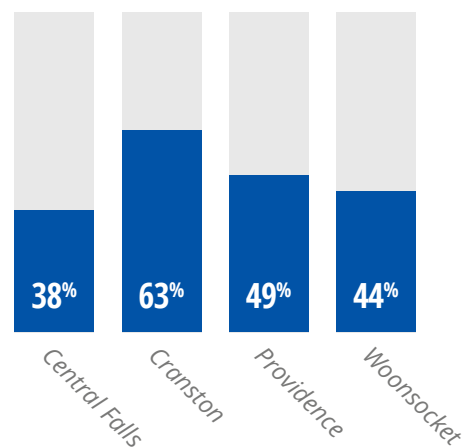
95% students enrolled in college after graduating high school<sup>19</sup>

## Comparative Data:

### 2018 Rhode Island High School 4-Year Graduation Rates:<sup>20</sup>



### 2017 High School Graduates Who Enrolled in College Within Six Months



## High-Quality Out of School Time Increases Social-Emotional Learning

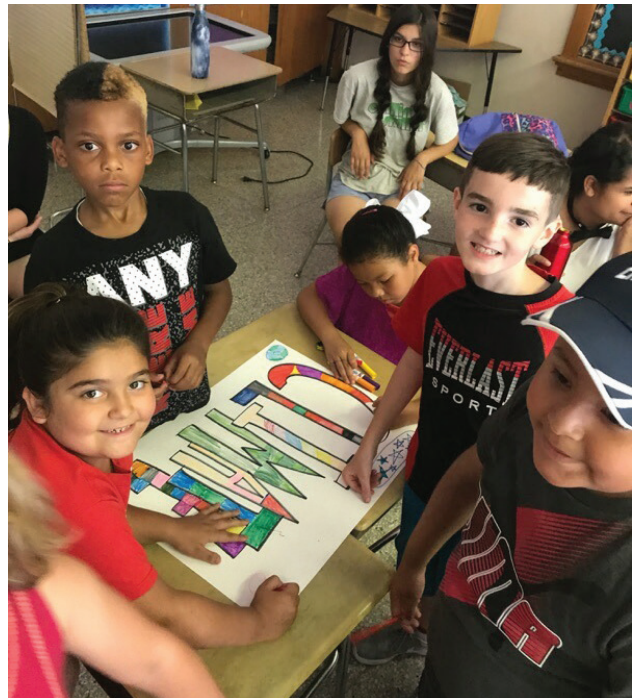
“Social and emotional learning is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”<sup>29</sup>

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, “When out of school time learning programs follow evidence-based practices aimed at improving young people’s personal and social skills programs, there is a significant improvement in self-perceptions, school bonding and positive social behaviors; significant reductions in conduct problems and drug use; and significant increases in achievement test scores, grades, and school attendance.”<sup>30</sup>

Social and emotional learning is especially important for youth who have experienced adversity or trauma (e.g., violence, food insecurity, homelessness, or the loss of a parent) and whose high levels of stress may interfere with their learning. When youth work with supportive adults to learn and actively practice skills that lead to self-awareness and self-control, and their physical, emotional, and mental health needs are directly addressed, they are given “a set of tools that provide on-ramps to learning.”<sup>31</sup>

When OST programs explicitly target specific social and emotional skills, a 2017 RAND study found that “participants demonstrated positive outcomes—such as significant increases in their self-perceptions, bonding to school, positive social behaviors, and academic achievement—along with reductions in problem behaviors.”<sup>32</sup>

The Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s Cranston Community Coalition was cited in a national study by the National Resources Center on Domestic Violence for its work preventing intimate partner violence. By focusing on youth-directed programming and training staff on positive youth development, the Cranston Community Coalition was able to tend to their youth’s feelings of connection and comfort and change their negative feelings about themselves.<sup>33</sup>



## High-Quality Out of School Time Learning Promotes Equity

“While out of school time learning serves a diverse racial and socioeconomic demographic, our work is critical for supporting marginalized communities—low-income youth and young people of color—what our partners at Youth In Action call ‘front-line communities.’ We play a vital role in family ecosystems by providing high-quality, educationally enriching free or reasonably priced out of school support for young people as well as working parents and caregivers.”<sup>34</sup>

There is a substantial gap between enrichment opportunities for youth from low-income and higher-income families. The highest-income families spend almost seven times more on enrichment activities for their children. This gap “likely contributes to the attainment gap that manifests in high school and college graduation rates, as well as in future employment.”<sup>35</sup>

While funding for OST programs can come from individual families, federal and city funding typically supports programming for youth from low-income families. These programs provide low-income youth access to academic support and enrichment activities that help build human and cultural capital and lead to lasting developmental benefits.<sup>36</sup>

Access to OST programs differs by income, race, and ethnicity. According to the Afterschool Alliance’s *America After 3PM* report, a substantial “56 percent of low-income households report that the cost of afterschool programs was a factor in their decision not to enroll their child in a program...and close to half of Hispanic parents (48 percent) and 46 percent of African-American parents report that a very important factor in their decision not to enroll their child in an afterschool program is that afterschool programs are not available in their community, compared to 38 percent of Caucasian parents.”<sup>37</sup>



# 03

## CURRENT OUT OF SCHOOL TIME SYSTEM IN RHODE ISLAND

“Rhode Island is a national leader in Youth Development—widely recognized for our vibrant 21st Century partnership, for innovative public-private models, a focus on SEL, rigorous and deeply researched assessment tools, as well as innovative and plentiful programing in areas like youth activism and the arts.”<sup>38</sup>



## Current OST System in RI: Introduction

Rhode Island benefits from hundreds of organizations that specialize in youth development and serve Rhode Island youth before and after school as well as during the summer and vacations. Some organizations serve as networking hubs, connecting youth and schools to community mentors and agencies; others offer programming in conjunction with schools; and some provide Out of School Time (OST) programming directly at their studio, community, library, and outdoor field spaces based in the community.



## Rhode Island Afterschool Network

Rhode Island Afterschool Network (RIAN), formerly known as the Afterschool Leadership Circle (ALC), is the statewide network that supports Rhode Island afterschool professionals who coordinate and run high-quality afterschool and summer learning opportunities for young people. RIAN is facilitated by United Way of Rhode Island.

As one of the 50 statewide afterschool networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, RIAN develops partnerships, informs public policy, and shapes best practices that sustain and increase the number of high-quality programs across Rhode Island.

RIAN encourages parents, policymakers, and school officials to rethink their definition of learning and consider the expanded learning that takes place outside of the traditional school day. RIAN also coordinates with the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative to abolish summer learning loss and provide enriching learning experiences for youth over the summer months.<sup>40</sup>

### RIAN's goals include:

- *Working to ensure all Rhode Island youth ages 5-18 have access to high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs.*
- *Encouraging partnerships between schools and communities to ensure the social, emotional, and academic needs of youth are met.*
- *Raising awareness about the numerous benefits of afterschool and summer learning.*
- *Partnering with local and state officials to implement policies that increase access to high-quality afterschool and summer programs.<sup>39</sup>*

## 21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLCs) are federally funded and authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The funds are funneled through the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). The main goals of 21st CCLCs is to provide academic enrichment, especially for students who attend low-performing schools, to meet state and local student academic standards in core subjects; offer programs that reinforce and complement the school day such as youth development, counseling, arts, recreation, and technology education programs; and family engagement.<sup>41</sup>

In Rhode Island there are 20 21st CCLC sites serving 11,000-12,000 students per year from 46 different schools with high poverty rates and high academic needs. Rhode Island's 21st CCLCs are located in Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.<sup>42</sup> Rhode Island's 21st CCLCs are based in either schools or community-based organizations; and an active, authentic partnership between both entities is required to receive this funding. 21st CCLCs and their program providers offer both afterschool and summer learning programming for elementary, middle, and high school students. Rhode Island's 21st CCLCs run both academic and enrichment programs that are facilitated by certified district teachers, program staff, and contracted providers. Rhode Island's 21st CCLC program is noted nationally for its youth development focus, inclusion of community partners, and efforts to align quality with the state standards and outcomes framework that has been recommended and adopted by RIAN, the Providence After School Alliance (PASA), and a majority of community providers.

Rhode Island students who attend 21st CCLCs typically have snack and/or dinner, receive homework help, and can experience a range of enrichment activities, including robotics, sailing, health and wellness, leadership training, sports, and English-language instruction. Jan Mermin, the Expanded Learning Opportunity Specialist at RIDE, oversees all 21st CCLCs in Rhode Island. Mermin says, while "programs look very different in different sites, they all are intended to be engaging, and enriching, experiences that build students' knowledge and skills to help them succeed in and out of the classroom."<sup>43</sup> In Rhode Island, 21st CCLCs are successful; 66 percent of the teachers of 21st CCLC students report homework completion and class participation improvement, and 61 percent report student behavior improvement.<sup>44</sup>

RIDE recently contracted with the American Institutes for Research to conduct a rigorous evaluation of the 21st CCLC grant. That evaluation found that there were strong, statistically significant reductions in unexcused absences from school and in disciplinary suspensions for students who participated in Rhode Island 21st CCLC programs for at least 30 days per year. The effects were even stronger for those who participated 60 days or more.<sup>45</sup>





## Rhode Island 21st Century Learning Centers: Students Served in Summer 2017\*

Community / District	PK-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	Total
Central Falls	169	90	76	133	<b>468</b>
Cranston	46	46	61	1	<b>154</b>
East Providence	33	33	-	-	<b>66</b>
Newport	87	81	59	150	<b>377</b>
Pawtucket	220	169	53	-	<b>442</b>
Providence	149	82	280	149	<b>660</b>
Woonsocket	129	96	69	74	<b>368</b>
Charter / State-Operated Schools	22	19	27	91	<b>159</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>2694</b>

## Rhode Island 21st Century Learning Centers: Students Served in School Year 2017-18\*

Community / District	PK-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	Total
Central Falls	252	216	141	205	<b>814</b>
Cranston	72	47	73	-	<b>192</b>
East Providence	109	52	-	-	<b>161</b>
Newport	508	289	383	387	<b>1567</b>
Pawtucket	515	305	12	-	<b>832</b>
Providence	368	224	1178	2375	<b>4145</b>
Woonsocket	260	219	297	763	<b>1539</b>
Charter / State-Operated Schools	205	141	600	257	<b>1203</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2289</b>	<b>1493</b>	<b>2684</b>	<b>3987</b>	<b>10453</b>

\*Tables provided by Rhode Island Department of Education.

## Providence After School Alliance

Providence After School Alliance (PASA)'s mission is to expand and improve quality afterschool, summer, and other expanded learning opportunities for the youth of Providence by organizing a sustainable, public/private system that contributes to student success and serves as a national model. PASA is a citywide intermediary that works with over 30 national models to increase access to quality learning opportunities, streamline public and private programming and support informal educators in improving their quality and learning practices based on the youth development standards developed by their field.

PASA's middle school initiative, the AfterZone, serves 1,500 youth every year at five Providence middle schools and sites throughout the city. Youth have access to almost 100 programs in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), and sports provided by 70 Providence organizations, teachers, and community-based educators. PASA's high school initiative, The Hub, serves 200 youth every year at two Providence high schools and 200 youth through ACN courses offered at community sites. All youth who participate in the AfterZone and The Hub receive meals and/or snacks and support with transportation.<sup>46</sup>



## Rhode Island's Child Opportunity Zones

Rhode Island's Child Opportunity Zones (COZs) are a full-service community school model of school-linked family centers that bring schools, families, and communities together to promote success in school for all children and youth.<sup>47</sup> Among their many services, COZs offer OST learning programs before school, after school, during vacation weeks and over the summer in ten communities throughout Rhode Island. They are



designed to close the opportunity gap that often exists for low-income children and families. COZs are located in Bristol-Warren, Central Falls, Cranston, Middletown, Newport, North Kingstown, Pawtucket, Providence, Westerly, and Woonsocket.

In addition to collaborating with local school districts, COZs collaborate with numerous community partners, such as the Norman Bird Sanctuary, the Newport Children's Theater, the Potter League for Animals, Mad Science, Shri Yoga, Ichiban Karate, The Empowerment Factory, Riverzedge, Books Are Wings, Island Moving Dance Company, and many more. OST programming includes a focus on literacy, STEAM, social and emotional learning, the arts, and physical activities.<sup>48</sup> Most recently, the COZs aligned their efforts with Governor Gina Raimondo's Rhode Island Third Grade Reading Action Plan, with an emphasis on increasing school readiness, decreasing chronic absenteeism, and mitigating summer learning loss. These three focus areas are key indicators of academic success.<sup>49</sup>

## Child Care Assistance Program

The schedule at early childhood and school-age centers do not always cover the entire day for many working families. Many Rhode Island families use child care subsidies through the Rhode Island Department of Human Services' Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to cover the cost of child care before the centers open or after they close. CCAP is available to: (1) low-income families who meet income guidelines and are working a minimum of 20 hours per week at or above Rhode Island's minimum wage; (2) families engaged in approved trainings or apprenticeships, families participating in the RI Works program; or (3) pregnant or parenting teens participating in the Department of Human Services' Youth Success program.<sup>50</sup>

Families can use CCAP funds to help subsidize a Department of Children, Youth and Families-licensed (DCYF) child care or school-age center, a DCYF-licensed family child care home, or a license-exempt provider (relative) who has received approval from the Department of Human Services. CCAP is available for children who are U.S. citizens or legal residents and under age 13. The age can be extended to 18 if the youth has special needs.<sup>51</sup>

## EduvateRI: Education Community Partner Database

EduvateRI seeks to close opportunity gaps for students, improve the national competitiveness of Rhode Island, and drive economic growth through new and existing education-related business.<sup>52</sup>

EduvateRI is creating a database of community partners throughout that state that either offer Out of School Time (OST) programming or can serve as a collaborator to schools during the school day. Here is a sampling of community partners serving youth during OST hours in Rhode Island.<sup>53</sup>

<i>ARISE</i>	<i>Environmental Justice League of RI</i>	<i>Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program</i>	<i>Rhode Island Latino Arts</i>
<i>AS220 Youth</i>	<i>Everett Dance Theatre</i>	<i>Mentor RI</i>	<i>RI Urban Debate League</i>
<i>Audubon Society of RI</i>	<i>FabNewport</i>	<i>Movement Embodied Outdoors (MEO)</i>	<i>RI Workforce Development Youthworks 411</i>
<i>Avenue Concept</i>	<i>Farm Fresh RI</i>	<i>NE Basecamp</i>	<i>RI Museum of Science and Art (RIMOSA)</i>
<i>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs</i>	<i>Federal Hill House Association</i>	<i>New Urban Arts</i>	<i>Riverzedge Arts</i>
<i>Breakthrough Providence</i>	<i>First Lego League of Rhode Island</i>	<i>Northern RI Collaborative</i>	<i>Save the Bay</i>
<i>Brown Refugee Youth Tutoring and Enrichment (BRYTE)</i>	<i>FirstWorks</i>	<i>Prepare RI</i>	<i>Southside Community Land Trust</i>
<i>Camp RYSE</i>	<i>Foster Forward</i>	<i>Princes to Kings</i>	<i>STEAM Box</i>
<i>Center for Dynamic Learning</i>	<i>Generation Citizen</i>	<i>Providence After School Alliance</i>	<i>Tomaquag Indigenous Museum</i>
<i>Child Opportunity Zones (COZ)</i>	<i>Girls Rock! RI</i>	<i>Providence Children and Youth Cabinet</i>	<i>Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council</i>
<i>College Crusade of RI</i>	<i>Goodwill Industries of RI</i>	<i>Providence City Arts for Youth</i>	<i>YMCA's</i>
<i>College Visions</i>	<i>Groundwork RI</i>	<i>Providence Student Union</i>	<i>Young Voices</i>
<i>Community Boating Center</i>	<i>Herreshoff Marine Museum</i>	<i>Providence Youth Slam</i>	<i>Youth In Action</i>
<i>Community MusicWorks</i>	<i>Highlander Institute</i>	<i>PrYSM (Providence Youth Student Movement)</i>	<i>Youth Pride, Inc.</i>
<i>Comprehensive Community Action Program (CCAP)</i>	<i>Institute for the Study &amp; Practice of Nonviolence</i>	<i>Public Libraries</i>	
<i>Confianza</i>	<i>IYRS School of Technology &amp; Trades</i>	<i>PVD Young Makers</i>	
<i>Connecting for Children &amp; Families</i>	<i>Kids in the Canyon</i>	<i>Refugee Dream Center</i>	
<i>Diversity Talks</i>	<i>Latino Policy Institute</i>	<i>Rhode Island Indian Council</i>	
<i>DownCity Design</i>	<i>Manton Avenue Project</i>		

# 04

## MONITORING AND ASSESSING QUALITY IN OUT OF SCHOOL TIME IN RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island Out of School Time (OST) programs utilize several measurement tools to ensure their programs are offering high-quality experiences for youth.



## Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) requires all 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) sites to assess their sites using the Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment (RIPQA). All sites engage in the assessment process twice over the course of their five-year funding period. The RIPQA includes between three to five program observations over the course of one year, a self-assessment of organization structure, the completion of the Quality Assurance Binder, and completion of a recommended and action plan. The process is facilitated by highly skilled Quality Advisors who provide site teams with the guidance and accountability to improve the quality of their program offerings. The Rhode Island Afterschool Network (RIAN) acts as the intermediary to support program quality improvement through the use of the RIPQA process.<sup>54</sup>

The program observation tool, developed by the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (CYPQ), measures the following areas: Safe environment; Supportive environment; Interaction; and Engagement.<sup>55</sup> The organizational self-assessment tool was developed jointly by RIDE, RIAN (then called RIASPA, the Rhode Island After School Plus Alliance), and the Providence After School Alliance (PASA), adapted from a tool created by CYPQ.<sup>56</sup> It tracks an organization's ability to support family engagement, civic engagement, staff development, professional development, and administrative functions.

## BrightStars

BrightStars is Rhode Island's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS), a method used across the United States to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care, school-age, and family child care settings. In Rhode Island, BrightStars is managed by the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC), the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).<sup>57</sup>

While any licensed child care center, family child care home, public school preschool, or stand-alone school-age program are eligible to apply for a BrightStars rating, programs that participate in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) are required to have a rating to maintain their CCAP Approval.<sup>58</sup> A site receives a quality rating of up to five stars based on a site visit and the completion of a comprehensive observation

using a nationally recognized, validated tool that result in a site report that includes information on staff qualifications, facility amenities, group sizes, and curriculum offered.<sup>59</sup> A Quality Rating and Improvement Specialist contacts the site and offers feedback. Each site then submits a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) within three months of the site visit. Following this submission, the BrightStars rating is valid for three years.<sup>60</sup>

According to the 2019 RI KIDS COUNT Factbook, in January 2019, "there were 79 independent school-age childcare programs participating in BrightStars (75 percent of licensed independent school-age child care programs). Ten programs (10 percent of all licensed programs) had a high-quality rating of four or five stars."<sup>61</sup>

## Rhode Island Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals

The Rhode Island Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals, or “Core Comps,” is a guide developed for youth development professionals to strengthen their instructional skills and standards of practice in delivering high-quality programs for youth. These core competencies define what afterschool and OST professionals need to know and be able to do in order to provide best practice when working with children and youth. A key element of the Core Comps is an understanding that working in OST programs requires knowledge and experience, professionalism, and ongoing training.<sup>62</sup>

## Department of Children, Youth and Families School-Age Licensing Regulations

The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is charged, under RI General Law §42-72.1, with the licensing, monitoring, and enforcement of regulations in all child care centers, foster homes, residential facilities, and for agencies who place children in order to ensure that providers ensure for the health, safety, and well-being of children in their care.<sup>63</sup> This licensing covers sites that care for youth ages six weeks to 16 years of age. The licensing process reviews the following characteristics: physical facilities; food preparation; outdoor play space; health, safety, and nutrition; routine care of children; enrollment and staffing; staff qualifications and ongoing professional development; administration; and learning and development.<sup>64</sup>



# 05

## TRAINING FOR OUT OF SCHOOL TIME AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS IN RHODE ISLAND

Youth development in Rhode Island is an emerging field. The job category has ranked in the top 50 growing occupations in the state every year from 2008 to 2018. Individuals who work in the Out of School Time (OST) field are often called youth development workers, meaning that they support young people's growth using a strengths-based perspective. When successful, this manner of support builds on young people's strengths to promote positive outcomes for children, youth, and their families.<sup>65</sup>

High-quality OST programs rely on high-quality staff. According to Victoria Restler, a professor in the Rhode Island College Youth Development Bachelor of Arts program, "youth workers with adequate training report feeling more competent and able to support young people in their development and learning. And substantive training has also been linked to retention of youth workers and reduction in staff turnover rates."<sup>66</sup>

All OST programs licensed by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) require that staff members are at least 18 years old with a high school diploma or GED, pass a state and national background check, and provide a physical with an up-to-date immunization record. Further, DCYF requires that all front-line staff receive 20 hours of professional development training in field-related topics annually.<sup>67</sup> Youth development professionals who staff 21st Century Community Learning Centers must also be at least 18 years old, pass a state and national background check, attend at least 20 hours of training each year, and receive continuous supervision and feedback.<sup>68</sup>



## The Rhode Island Afterschool Network

The Rhode Island Afterschool Network (RIAN), an education initiative of United Way of Rhode Island, offers multiple, high-quality professional development opportunities throughout the year for afterschool and youth development professionals. Recent trainings include: “Diversity and Inclusion Series,” “Becoming Visible: Serving LGBTQ+ Youth & Young Adults,” and “Youth Mental Health First Aid Series.”

RIAN, in partnership with the Center for Leadership and Education Equity, facilitates the Afterschool Leaders Institute, a six-month fellowship experience designed for professionals in the afterschool and youth development fields, focusing on leadership and management skills and capacity building.<sup>69</sup>



## The Providence After School Alliance

The Providence After School Alliance (PASA) offers professional development on a monthly basis to its staff, its program providers, the Providence Public School District, the City of Providence, and for RIAN’s seasonal training calendars. Workshop topics include: positive youth development practices cultural competency, group facilitation strategies, and youth voice.<sup>70</sup> These workshops are rooted in youth development standards developed by the Rhode Island provider community as well as feedback from the Program Quality Assessments and program partners. PASA also offers all its partners the use of a suite of quality assessment tools, data reports, as well as coaching and feedback on how to improve program design and instruction on a continuous basis.



## The Rhode Island Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs



The Rhode Island Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs offers a robust training program with instructor-led, distance-learning, and in-service training opportunities for youth development staff through Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Spillett Leadership University. Instructor-led trainings are offered at least quarterly statewide, with national trainers from Boys & Girls Clubs of America providing high-quality instruction. Distance learning options ensure that new staff members have access to training as soon as they start to help ensure program quality. Training topics include "Building Resiliency in Youth," "Creating and Emotionally Safe Club," and "STEM in the Club." The Rhode Island Alliance worked with the Department of Children, Youth and Families to have the entire Spillett Leadership University training catalogue approved for professional development for childcare workers.<sup>71</sup>

## Rhode Island College's Youth Development B.A. Program

Developed in collaboration with RIAN and PASA, Rhode Island College's Youth Development B.A. Program (YDEV@RIC) debuted in 2012. The only degree of its kind in the entire state, YDEV@RIC prepares students for careers with youth within afterschool programs, recreation centers, community arts centers, youth residential housing, justice and probation sites, youth ministry, and governmental agencies. In addition to coursework in education, youth development, and social work, its graduates also earn a non-profit studies certificate where they develop leadership and management skills.<sup>72</sup> As part of their requirements, students intern at a field site for least 180 hours over two semesters. Many students are offered employment at the site upon internship completion; all spring 2018 graduates had a job placement before the end of their last semester. There are currently over one hundred YDEV@RIC alumni, all of whom are currently working in some capacity in youth development, including afterschool programs in Rhode Island.<sup>73</sup>

Starting in the fall of 2019, RIC will offer a Master's degree in Youth Development for working professionals that aims to "equip students with the knowledge and skills to lead, design, research, and innovate in youth settings."<sup>74</sup> The program commits to a framework of social justice, culturally relevant care, and democratic, experiential learning; and will prepare its students to be advocates, partners, and leaders in the field of youth development.<sup>75</sup>



# 06

## SUSTAINABILITY AND EXPANSION OF FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS IN RHODE ISLAND

"Afterschool provides a solid return on investment. Research shows that every \$1 invested in afterschool programs saves at least \$3 by increasing learning potential, school performance, and reducing crime and juvenile delinquency."<sup>76</sup>

The majority of funding for Out of School Time Learning (OST) in Rhode Island comes from the federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), distributed through the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE); and the Child Care Assistance Program, funded through the federal Child Care and Development Block Grants and distributed through the Rhode Island Department of Human Services.

The current President's 2018 budget has proposed to eliminate the 21st CCLC grant and hold the Child Care and Development Block Grants at fiscal 2016 spending levels. This would result in a dramatic reduction in federal funding that could be used for OST programs.<sup>77</sup>



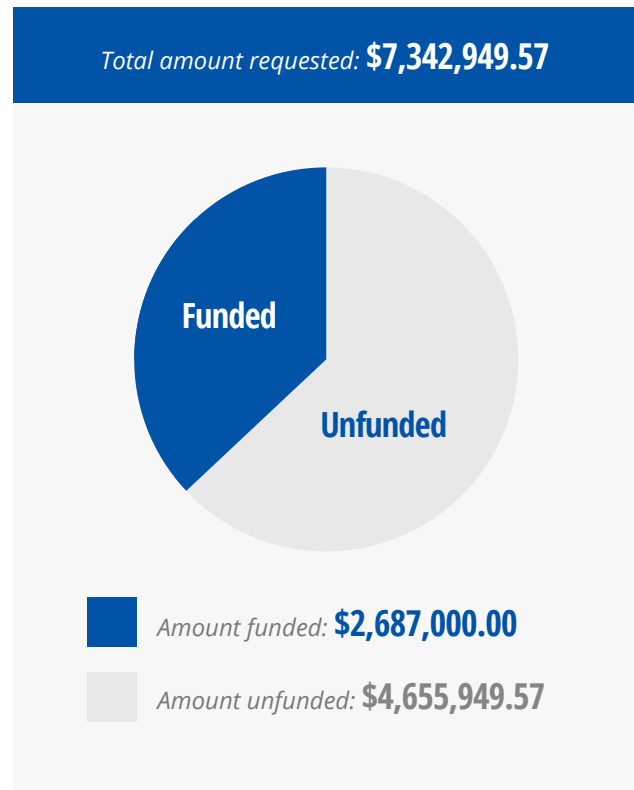
## 21st Century Community Learning Centers Funding

Rhode Island receives \$5.8M per year from the federally funded 21st Century funds. In Rhode Island there are 20 21st CCLC sites that serve 11,000-12,000 students per year from 46 different schools with high poverty rates and high academic needs.<sup>78</sup>

Nationally, only one out of three funding requests for 21st CCLC sites are awarded; an estimated \$4 billion in requests have been denied over the past ten years due to lack of adequate federal funding.<sup>79</sup> In 2017-2018, schools and community-based organizations in Rhode Island requested a total of over \$7M to meet the needs of their programming. RIDE was only able to distribute approximately \$2.7M, leaving programs with a funding gap of almost \$4.7M. This means that approximately two out of every three communities that was seeking to expand afterschool opportunities could not be funded.<sup>80</sup>

## 2017-2018 21st Century Community Learning Centers Funding Requests in Rhode Island

OST learning sites throughout the state must braid together funding from numerous sources in order to cover the costs of their physical spaces, staffing, programming, and transportation costs. In addition to funds from 21st CCLC grants, schools may receive funding from the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title I Grant, Perkins Career, Technical and Adult Education grants. In order to fill the gaps in funding, Rhode Island OST learning sites typically apply for funding from private foundations, local and national grants, legislative grants, city funding, and/or may collect individual family enrollment fees.



## American Federation of Teachers

Since 2017, the American Federation of Teachers has provided \$200,000 to the Pawtucket School Department to fund a Community School Coordinator at the Agnes E. Little Elementary School and the Henry J. Winters Elementary School. A primary feature of the Community School model is to connect youth to OST programming.<sup>84</sup>

## Rhode Island's Child Opportunity Zones

Every school year, each of Rhode Island's Child Opportunity Zones (COZs) complete a RI State Designated Grant Application to receive funding. In the 2018-2019 school year, a total of \$345,000 was distributed evenly among the ten COZs across the state. Sites couple their grants with 21st CCLC grants and/or funding from school districts, foundations, corporations, and community-based organizations to provide programming for youth. The Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools reports that it costs approximately \$150,000-\$250,000 per school to succeed as a community school that integrates student support, expanded learning time opportunities, family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practice.<sup>81</sup> The following positive outcomes are a representative sampling of the successful work of the COZ sites:

# 80%

*80% of children met or exceeded learning expectations*

### **School Readiness:**

80 percent of children who graduated from the Woonsocket COZ's two state-funded pre-k classrooms met or exceeded the learning expectations for their age group based on Teaching Strategies Gold, an assessment program comprised of objectives for development and learning from birth through 3rd grade.

# 50%

*50% decline in chronic absenteeism rate*

### **Chronic Absenteeism:**

The Providence COZ worked with students at one middle school to track and address chronic absenteeism. The school went from a 19 percent chronic absenteeism rate to a 7.6 percent rate.

# 61%

*61% (on average) increased or maintained in NWEA scores*

### **Mitigating Summer Loss:**

The Westerly COZ's full-time summer learning program either increased or maintained students' NWEA scores in literacy and mathematics by 77 percent and 45 percent respectively.<sup>82</sup>

## Child Care Assistance Program Funding

As previously mentioned in this report, many Rhode Island families use child care subsidies through the Rhode Island Department of Human Services' Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to cover the cost of childcare before the centers open or after they close.

The current income limit to enroll in the CCAP program is 180 percent of the federal poverty guidelines (\$36,288 for a family of three in 2016). Families who qualify for CCAP can choose the DCYF-licensed child care or school-age program in which to enroll their child. Families with incomes above the poverty level are charged co-payments.<sup>83</sup>

# 07

## GAPS IN THE RHODE ISLAND OUT OF SCHOOL TIME SYSTEM

The need for Out of School Time (OST) programs in Rhode Island far surpasses the available funding. Among Rhode Island's K-12 students, 34,704 are enrolled in afterschool, 37,471 are waiting for an available program, and 27,062 are alone and unsupervised after school. <sup>85</sup>

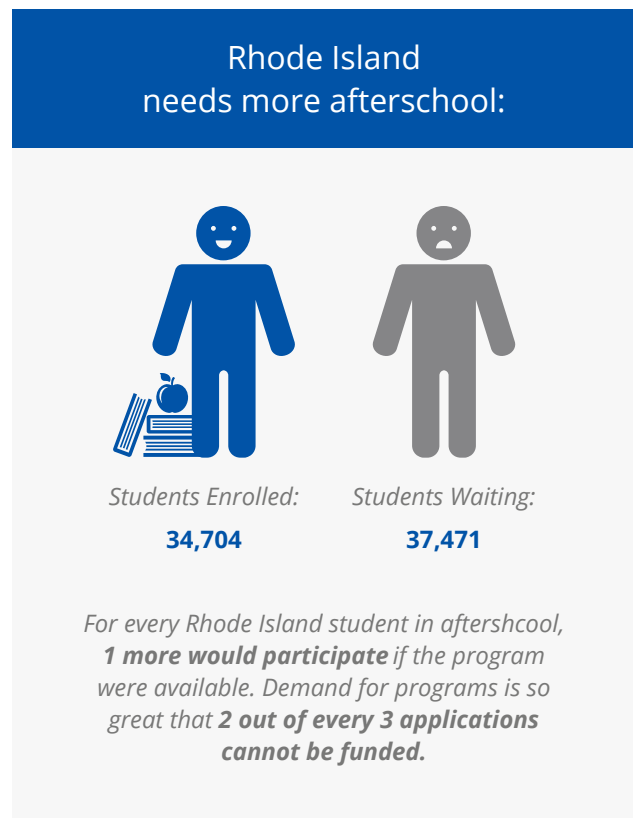
## Gaps in the Rhode Island Out of School Time System

The demand for OST programs is so great that two out of every three families cannot find or afford afterschool and summer learning programs in Rhode Island.<sup>86</sup> This means that working families across Rhode Island must leave their children unattended or with low-quality care so they can adequately support their family.

High-quality afterschool and youth development professionals are essential if Rhode Island is to offer youth programming that improves students' academic and behavior outcomes. According to the National Institute on Out-of-School Time at Wellesley Centers for Women, "youth workers who staff afterschool and community-based programs play a critical role in providing a bridge of vital supports and opportunities for children and youth during the after-school hours, however many leave the profession after a few years. Increases in wages and access to benefits could stabilize the workforce and advance the profession."<sup>87</sup>

Rhode Island currently offers T.E.A.C.H. scholarships for licensed center-based and home-based childcare providers pursuing coursework in early childhood education or seeking degrees at CCRI or RIC. Expanding this scholarship fund for Rhode Island students who study Youth Development at RIC in their B.A. and M.A. programs would ensure a pipeline of skilled OST program staff for years to come.

Access to the most up-to-date information about OST offerings varies across the state and type of programs. Rhode Island would benefit from a statewide OST database that would enable families to easily pick and view programs with a clear understanding of their locations, hours, offerings, and more. This database could build upon the mapping work of United Way of Rhode Island and Eduvate, and information about CCAP-approved sites.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

“When making funding decisions, federal, state, and local policymakers should consider all the benefits that OST programs provide. The availability of OST programming for students from low-income families depends on the availability of funding—and even with current funding levels, the supply of high-quality programming does not meet demand from families. The continuity of funding streams can be leveraged to support access and quality, which will promote strong youth and family outcomes. In the opinion of the authors, OST programs for low-income students are worthy of public investment and should be funded at levels that support high-quality programming.”<sup>88</sup>



## Dedicated Funding Stream

For schools to move the needle on educational outcomes, there needs to be a robust and well-resourced afterschool system that supports the social-emotional learning and essential skill-building that spark youth engagement in learning. Rhode Island has a network of high-quality OST programs that have been supported by federal and philanthropic investments. However, for every student enrolled in these programs, there is another student that wants to enroll but cannot because programs are full or not available.

There is an urgent need for state investment in the afterschool and youth development system if we are to realize Rhode Island's vision for youth to leave high school with the skills and aptitudes to be successful in post-secondary education and the workforce. A state investment in the afterschool and youth development system is the missing piece in efforts to ensure that children and youth are ready for college, careers, and life.

We therefore recommend that the Rhode Island budget includes a dedicated funding stream for OST Learning programs across the state, with attention to increased access in high-poverty communities. The dedicated funding stream could focus its investment in: (1) high-quality OST programs and instructors; (2) quality outcomes and professional development; and (3) workforce development and funding for a pipeline of high-quality youth development professionals.

Rhode Island can learn about best practices in state funding from our neighboring states. According to Jennifer Rinehart, the Senior Vice President of Research and Policy at the national Afterschool Alliance, there are approximately 18 other states across the country that currently provide state funding for OST.<sup>89</sup>

Since 2010, Massachusetts has distributed funds for afterschool programs through its Quality Enhancements in After-School and Out-of-School Time (ASOST-Q) Grant Program. It currently offers \$2M for Massachusetts public school districts, private schools, and public and private community-based organizations (CBOs) with existing OST programs. The main priorities for the ASOST-Q grant is to improve the quality of OST programs and services by supporting programs that enhance quality and develop regional and statewide professional development. Applicants can receive up to \$30,000 for "staff and coordinator salaries related to the quality enhancement; professional development; stipends for professionals and students involved in the delivery of services; activities to promote family engagement; additional costs associated with serving students with disabilities and/or students who are English learners; program materials and supplies; and transportation."<sup>90</sup>

Across the country, states are taking non-traditional approaches to fund OST programs. Both Nebraska and Tennessee utilize lottery funds for afterschool. After creating a state lottery in 2002, the Tennessee legislature implemented a Lottery for Education After School Programs (LEAP), which administers competitive grants and technical assistance to eligible organizations providing afterschool education programs.<sup>91</sup> Other states that have legalized marijuana for adult recreational use are transferring revenue from marijuana sales to fund youth prevention-based OST programs. Rinehart notes that Alaska was "recently successful at getting 25% of the tax revenue set aside for a marijuana treatment and education fund, and half of the overall revenue will go specifically to afterschool."<sup>92</sup>

## Director of Out of School Time Programming in Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Afterschool Network (RIAN) recommends that the state finances a new role positioned within the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), entitled the Director of Out of School Time (OST) Programming.

The Director would ensure that there is a seamless collaboration among OST federal, state, and local funding streams to best meet the needs of Rhode Island youth and their families. In addition to ensuring equity and efficiency by blending and braiding funds, the Director of OST could coordinate oversight and quality among all OST programs.

The Director of OST would collaborate closely with RIDE's 21st CCLC Manager & Expanded Learning Opportunity Specialist as well as their School Health Specialist who oversees grants for the Rhode Island's Child Opportunity Zones, Rhode Island's Community School Initiative. The Director of OST would also consult regularly with the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families, Department of Labor/Workforce Board, and the Department of Human Services to ensure each department is sharing best practices and working toward a common vision.

According to the Aspen Institute's study *From a Nation at Risk to a Nation at Hope*,<sup>93</sup> "Too often, resources are not aligned and do not operate in a coherent fashion because of multiple funding streams, conflicting rules and regulations, and lack of coordination. Furthermore, resources are not always pointed at the most important supports and services. Most communities need investments to achieve a whole-child support system or infrastructure that can tie frequently siloed programs and initiatives together on behalf of young people and their families."

Rhode Island can learn from California's Division of Expanded Learning within the California Department of Education.<sup>94</sup> The Director of the After School Education & Safety (ASES) Program oversees the funds that support local before- and afterschool education and enrichment programs that "provide literacy, academic enrichment, and safe constructive alternatives for students in kindergarten through ninth grade."<sup>95</sup>

## Statewide Needs Assessment Survey with a Focus on Transportation

In order to ensure that funding and support is reaching the families and communities most in need, the Rhode Island Afterschool Network recommends a statewide needs assessment survey that would provide qualitative and quantitative data to determine gaps in services. By administering a survey, including focus groups and key informant interviews, the state can ascertain which areas/regions/counties/municipalities may require additional programs and which demographics are not being served. This survey can then assist the state in prioritizing funding. A key piece of this survey should focus on analyzing the current transportation systems across Rhode Island to determine how they can be better utilized to transport youth to and from OST programs across the state. With this understanding, the state can assure equity through accessibility for youth to engage in OST programming.

## CONCLUSION

Out of School Time (OST) learning matters. When youth participate in high-quality OST programs, they are safe, and they are more likely to succeed in school and careers. Rhode Island parents support high-quality OST programs. 71 percent of Rhode Island parents support public funding for afterschool programs. Rhode Island's OST programs are aligned to the state's educational goals. When young people regularly attend OST programs, they improve in math and other academic outcomes, decrease behavioral problems, and attend school more regularly. OST programs ensure that youth are prepared for the workforce and have the social and emotional skills necessary to navigate their lives. When the state invests in OST learning programs, it is investing in an equitable Rhode Island where all students, regardless of income, may have access to engaging and enriching experiences.

Rhode Island has all the ingredients it needs for a successful OST learning system. The state is filled with youth-serving, community-based organizations that are highly regarded across the country for best practices in youth development. Schools, foundations, and state-level agencies already have demonstrated decades of collaborating, designing, and implementing quality measurement tools that ensure that youth are receiving the highest quality learning experiences. Afterschool and youth professionals have access to first-rate professional development, and there is an educational pipeline for a talented and well-prepared youth development workforce.

***Given the adequate resources, OST learning programs in Rhode Island could be truly transformative for our youth and serve as a model for the nation. Rhode Island parents are asking for it; Rhode Island youth deserve it. An investment in OST learning is an investment in our state's future.***

## SPOTLIGHT: CHILLIN' & SKILLIN'

*Spotlight written by Brittany Kraft as part of United Way of Rhode Island's report "Investing in Rhode Island's Future: Enriched by Afterschool Programming," with updates submitted by Connecting for Children & Families.*

The Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative (HSLI) is a six-week summer program offering Rhode Island children the opportunity to participate in a fun, hands-on, academically rooted program. HSLI is funded by the Hasbro Children's Fund, United Way of Rhode Island, a private foundation, and various Rhode Island businesses. The program uses engaging curriculum and service-learning to combat the phenomenon called "summer learning loss," in which research shows that regardless of socioeconomic status, all children lose up to two months of math computational skills if not actively engaged in summer learning.<sup>96</sup>

Connecting for Children & Families' Chillin' & Skillin' is one of the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative summer programs for 110 youth entering grades 3-5 in a Woonsocket school. The registration cost for the six-week program is \$20 with a Connecting for Children & Families (CCF) membership, and \$35 for those who are not members. The program is designed to integrate math and literacy curriculum into enrichment activities that include participation in art, theater, environmental science, health and safety, swimming, cooking, financial literacy, and weekly field trips. Chillin' & Skillin' also serves students breakfast and lunch every day, which helps to combat food insecurity that may occur when children lack access to daily meals like they do during the school year. Students who participated in the summer of 2018 learned about the ecosystems in Woonsocket and Rhode Island; mapped out their neighborhood; and used their burgeoning service-learning skills to determine ways to clean up their city. Then, to intensify their service-learning, they sent letters to the mayor to remove plastic bags from stores; created posters and videos addressing recycling and keeping parks clean; made bracelets from recycled

plastic bags to give away to fellow campers and families; and up-cycled old crates and boxes into planters to grow vegetables.

This HSLI program is staffed by many employees of CCF, including those who work in afterschool enrichment programs throughout the school year. Four certified teachers from the Woonsocket Education Department are a key part of the team, as they ensure academic standards are part of the daily learning experience. CCF also recruits college students to serve as summer staff at Chillin' & Skillin' through recruitment efforts by their AmeriCorps Coordinator. Additional Chillin' & Skillin' staff include high school students hired by the Community Care Alliance, and outside program providers from agencies such as Audubon, Save the Bay, and The Gamm Theatre. The program is highly successful, with most students returning in subsequent years until they "age out," and employees returning to work the summer program annually. Following summer 2018, 76 percent of the students entering grades 3-5 who participated in the Chillin' & Skillin' program maintained or improved their performance in pre- and post-tests conducted as part of the United Way/Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative.<sup>97</sup>



# SPOTLIGHT: FABNEWPORT

*Based on Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Student-Centered Learning Spotlight on FabNewport.*

FabNewport is a community-based non-profit maker space and learning studio serving Newport, Middletown, and Rhode Island at large.<sup>98</sup> FabNewport provides middle and high school students “alternative pathways to science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) through mentoring and personalized education.”<sup>99</sup> The organization also teamed up with the City of Providence, Providence Public Library, the Providence Community Libraries, the Rhode Island Museum of Science and Art, and Young Voices to bring makerspaces into 10 libraries in Providence neighborhoods.<sup>100</sup>

FabNewport has served as an Advanced Coursework Network site, offering middle and high school students across the state credit-bearing courses, including Computer Science Principles, 3-D Design and Digital Manufacturing, and Wearables: Introduction to Embedding Electronics and Clothing. The organization emphasizes the student-centered learning principle of “Learning Anytime, Anywhere,” in which structured, credit-bearing learning experiences can take place in the community and outside of the traditional school day or school year.

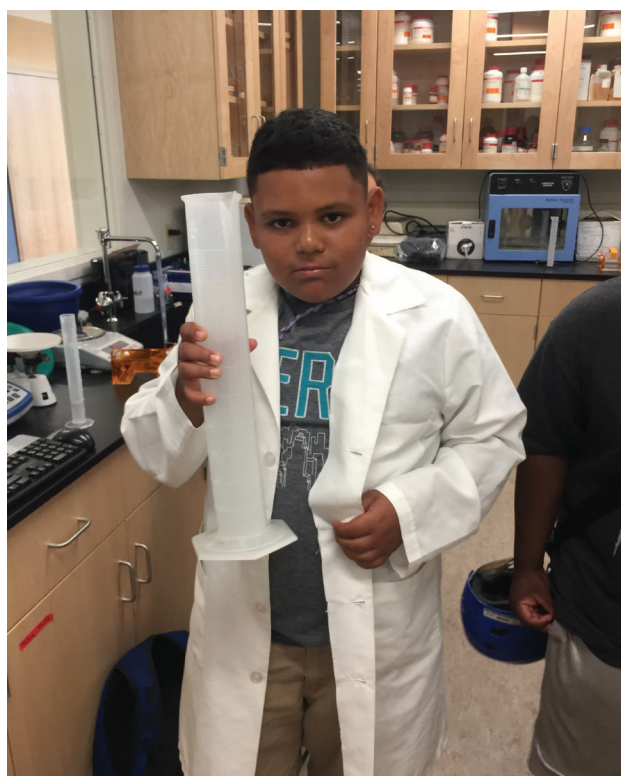
FabNewport offers classes, workshops, and afterschool programs for students who want to create, tinker, and make by using innovative tools, including 3-D printers, laser cutters, heat presses, vinyl cutters, sewing machines, and power tools. According to founder and Executive Director Steve Heath, “Once students become ‘makers’ in a lab or classroom space, they build the skills they need to make their lives.”

Jacob Long is an eighth grader at Thompson Middle School in Newport. Attending two consecutive summers of camp at FabNewport sparked Long’s love of Scratch, a programming language designed for children ages eight to 16.

Long has shared his knowledge of Scratch in many different venues throughout the state, including maker fairs, professional development programs for teachers, family nights, and various community events. He has assisted Heath by creating a video to help teach adults and children how to use Scratch.

Long appreciates the type of learning he does with FabNewport because it is “more hands-on and more fun.” He has enjoyed learning new skills, such as using the laser cutter, learning how to code, and learning how to do 3-D printing. This type of learning is rewarding for Long: “When I get to make things and see something I made, I feel pretty accomplished.”<sup>101</sup>

Long believes that learning skills through FabNewport will make it easier for him to get a job after he graduates from high school, especially since he plans to do concept art for the game industry.



## SPOTLIGHT: DOWNCITY DESIGN

*Adapted from by Brittany Kraft's Spotlight written as part of United Way of Rhode Island's report "Investing in Rhode Island's Future: Enriched by Afterschool Programming."*

DownCity Design (DCD) is a community design studio founded in 2009 with the mission of improving Providence by inviting youth to design and build structures that respond creatively to challenges and opportunities in their communities.<sup>102</sup> Over 1,800 youth between the ages of 11 and 18 have participated in DCD's free afterschool and summer learning programs. DCD programs focus on service-learning, and have resulted in over 70 youth-created amenities for public spaces in and around Providence, including community gardens, creative play structures for parks and early childhood programs, and outdoor classrooms for local schools.

DCD programs provide young people with opportunities to develop essential workforce and life skills, including collaboration, communication, creative problem solving, and persistence. Students engage in rigorous Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) learning through curricula aligned to Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.<sup>103</sup> DCD hires a staff of educators who

are credentialed designers, with applicable degrees and years of work experience, as well as training in education and positive youth development. DCD is a grantee of Rhode Island Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center Initiative and the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative and offers credit to students as a career-related Advanced Coursework Network class.

DCD programs provide valuable workforce training opportunities as youth work directly with adult clients using a design-thinking format to communicate, problem-solve, and meet the goals and constraints of the project. Their design programs are student-driven, inquiry-based, and empower youth to see themselves as agents of change who have the power and the skills to improve their communities. DCD's 2018 summer learning program was available for youth age 14 and older through a competitive interview process; the 75 participating teens were paid a stipend for their work through a partnership with the Governor's Workforce Board's Real Skills for Youth grant.<sup>104</sup>



# SPOTLIGHT: THE PROVIDENCE AFTER SCHOOL ALLIANCE

*Submitted by PASA*

The Providence After School Alliance (PASA) works with the City of Providence to run a public-private partnership, where each year it coordinates between 50 and 70 community-based organizations that provide afterschool programming to more than 1,500 middle school students. A student's afternoon begins and ends at a neighborhood middle school, where they have a meal. Students choose from a wide selection of programming and participate in an on-site club focused on social, emotional, and cognitive skill building.

All provider organizations are held to a single set of quality standards and receive training and support to help students acquire a set of essential social-emotional learning (SEL) skills that will help them succeed academically and in the workplace. Development of SEL skills are a key element of PASA programs run by partners such as the RI Zoological Society, DownCity Design, and the Empowerment Factory, to name just a few. SEL skills development is also a fundamental part of the PASA high school badge program, where over 400 students can earn badges in engagement, perseverance, and teamwork that can help lead them to summer employment opportunities as part of 15 credit-bearing courses offered by a team of Advanced Coursework Network-approved course offerings.

During a program with partner Save the Bay, teams of students set about building seaworthy vessels using only cardboard and duct tape. Guided by adults, including a middle school math teacher and Save the Bay staff, students put to immediate use science and math lessons about buoyancy and boat construction as their boats slowly took shape. Eventually, teams carried their finished boats to a dock and placed them in the water. Two to a boat, the students clambered in



and took up oars. A starting whistle blew, teammates cheered, and the race was on. Although most of the boats managed to stay afloat for the duration of the race, the students and adults knew that the seaworthiness of each vessel was not the only goal they had all worked to achieve. Post-race, teams sat down for group reflection, a key strategy to deepen learning. They discussed how they could improve their vessel for next time. They also discussed the challenges and successes the team experienced in their preparation; their communication; and their ability to collaborate during the entire build, design, and race process.

Communities know that improving student success in school goes beyond improving test scores. By emphasizing the learning that happens when social, emotional, and cognitive growth are connected, PASA's over 50 program providers offer a more fully balanced approach to teaching and learning, focusing on developing the whole child while continuously assessing the methods that adults and educators use to get there. Research shows that this approach to youth development improves academic and workplace outcomes for students who might already be at a disadvantage due to poverty levels, racial inequities, and societal assumptions. PASA's ongoing work with its community partners strives to continuously assess and improve the ways we educate and enrich Providence youth. In doing so, students develop the ability to link learned academic skills and content to relevant life experiences in school and beyond.

# SPOTLIGHT: THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS IN RHODE ISLAND

*Submitted by the Rhode Island Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs*

The mission of Boys & Girls Clubs is to enable all young people, especially those with the most need, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens. The Boys & Girls Clubs in Rhode Island serve more than 30,245 youth through membership and community outreach.

There are six Boys & Girls Club organizations, with 19 sites, in eight Rhode Island communities. In one year, they cumulatively serve more than 250,000 meals and 82,000 snacks to participating youth; and their programs aim to increase graduation rates, decrease crime, and promote healthy living. Programming included STEM; creativity; literacy; college and workforce development; 21st Century leadership and character; and fitness, health, and wellness.

The Boys & Girls Clubs in Rhode Island are currently working to expand their services for youth and families to address the state's opioid crisis. They aim to deliver a comprehensive primary prevention program for Rhode Island youth to help ensure they avoid high-risk behaviors, including addiction.

They also teach resiliency skills that will support youth as they cope with challenges, work as teams, pursue their goals, and make healthy choices. Data from the National Youth Outcomes Initiative demonstrates that youth from Rhode Island-based Boys & Girls Clubs are surpassing state averages in key prevention focus

areas. For example, 12 percent of Boys & Girls Clubs youth report using marijuana, compared to 24 percent of youth statewide; 7 percent of Club members report having consumed alcohol, compared to 26 percent youth statewide; and 6 percent of Club members report misusing prescription drugs, compared to 10 percent statewide.<sup>105</sup>

Finally, to help address and defeat the opioid crisis, the Boys & Girls Clubs in Rhode Island aim to increase the number of children participating in the SMART (Skills, Mastery, and Resistance Training) Moves prevention program; implement the Positive Action program that teaches youth about the negative consequences of using substances; train staff and volunteers in the principles of trauma-informed care; and hire social workers who specialize in supporting opioid-affected youth.<sup>106</sup>





# SPOTLIGHT: PRINCES TO KINGS YOUTH MENTORSHIP INITIATIVE

*Submitted by Princes to Kings*

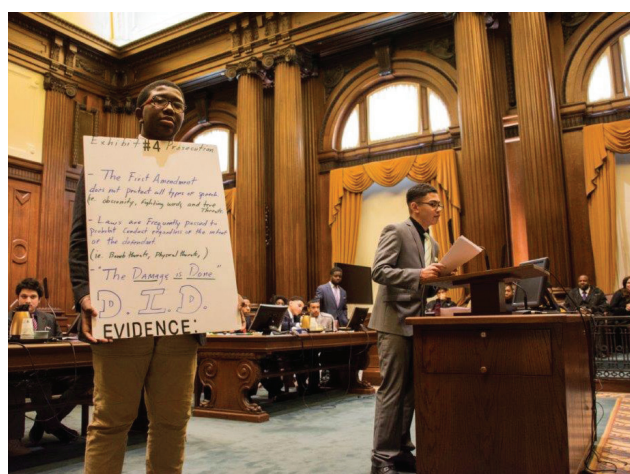
Healthy People 2020 is a 10-year agenda for improving the Nation's health sponsored by the United States Office of Disease Prevention and health promotion.<sup>107</sup> One goal of US Healthy People 2020 is to increase the proportion of youth who receive a high school diploma on time. Obtaining a high school diploma is associated with positive economic, social, behavioral, physical, and mental health outcomes that persist into adulthood. However, due to a complex interaction of multilevel factors (e.g., low socioeconomic status, poor educational infrastructure, English as a Second Language, racial and gender discrimination), some racial-gender subgroups are not on track to meet the US Healthy People 2020 goal.

In the 2013-2014 school year, 59 percent and 67 percent of Black and Latino males, respectively, graduated from Providence Public Schools. Also during this school year, 28 percent of Native American, 13 percent of Hispanic, and 12 percent of Black students

dropped out of high school. This data suggests that effective programs to support on-time high school graduation among minority males in Providence are critically needed. Princes to Kings (P2K) utilizes evidence-based practices to increase the percentage of minority males who graduate from high school on time in Providence, RI.

The P2K program is a partnership among government, community organizations and universities (e.g., RI Department of Health, Boys & Girls Clubs of Providence). P2K includes six major evidence-based program components that operate year-round as well as academic support in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM); mentoring; athletics; workforce development; cultural activities; and leadership development. Young men ages 12 to 18 are eligible if they attend one of three schools in the Southside and West End neighborhoods in Providence at the time of enrollment.

To determine on-time graduation rates, young men are enrolled and followed for the remaining four P2K program years. The P2K Summer Enrichment Program has been implemented the last three summers. Boys attended sessions four days a week for five hours each day. Overall, 80 percent of participants reported that they were completely or mostly satisfied with the summer enrichment program. The average participant reported that the P2K summer enrichment program positively benefited their personal and interpersonal development (e.g., goal setting, effort, leadership, linkages to college and work, pro-social norms).



*Photo by Scott Lapham*

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**Rhode Island Afterschool Network (RIAN) is a statewide network of Rhode Islanders who support quality afterschool and summer learning opportunities for young people.**