

2023-25 State After-School Grant Program Summary

Program Purpose and Design

The After School Grant Program was established by the Connecticut General Assembly for the purpose of creating high-quality after school programs outside of regular school hours. After school programs are defined as programs that take place when school is not in session (e.g., before and after school, summer recess and school breaks) and provide educational enrichment and recreational activities for students in Grades K-12. At the same time, after school programs help support families by offering educational development opportunities and providing a safe environment for students when school is not in session. Programs can be situated across the grade levels in elementary, middle or high schools or other similar accessible academic facility and provide a range of high-quality services to support student learning and development, including:

- provide opportunities for academic enrichment to help students meet state and local performance standards in core academic subjects.
- offer a broad array of additional services, programs and activities such as: youth development activities; counseling; project-based learning; art; music; technology; service learning; and recreation programs that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and
- offer families of students served by after school programs opportunities for literacy and related educational development such as: adult development activities, family activities, opportunities for governance and leadership involvement, and participation in school and program events.

Funding

State - \$5,759,695 (FY2023-25)

The minimum grant award is \$25,000 per fiscal year. The maximum grant award is \$200,000 per fiscal year. Historical average annual cost per program has ranged from \$150,000 to \$200,000, for two program sites serving a total of 150 students. Actual costs per program may be higher or lower depending on the number of students served, the variety of activities provided and the availability of additional resources.

Program Locations

28 grantees, 77 sites, in 24 districts. Bethany, Bridgeport, Eastford, Enfield, Danbury, Hampton, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, Middletown, Milford, New Britain, New Haven, Norwalk, Plainfield, Scotland, Stafford, Waterbury, West Haven, Willington, Winchester, Windham, EASTCONN, Ed Advance.

Types and Variety of Programming Offered

Each eligible organization that receives an award may use the funds to carry out a broad array of activities during before and after school, summer recess and school breaks that advance student achievement including:

- remedial education activities and academic enrichment programs;
- science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics (STEM) activities;
- arts programming including visual arts, theater and music education activities;
- entrepreneurial education programs;
- homework help and tutoring services (including those provided by volunteers and mentoring programs);
- after school activities for Multilingual Learners (MLs) that emphasize language skills and academic performance;
- health and wellness activities, including physical and mental health;
- walking, running, and dancing
- outdoor active play and recreational activities;
- drug, teen pregnancy and violence prevention programs, counseling programs;
- programs that promote social/emotional learning and character development;
- service learning activities;

- global education and world languages;
- college and career readiness activities;
- virtual high school and other credit recovery opportunities; and
- family engagement activities and family literacy.

Quality Improvement and Professional Learning

Quality Improvement

Programs must participate in a designated quality improvement process with the CSDE and subcontracted providers. This process may include trainings, meetings, conference calls, scheduled site visits for program observation and feedback and interviews with administrators, staff, families and students.

Professional Learning

Programs must also provide professional learning for all staff of the after school program, which may include:

- New Grantee Orientation for an overview of CSDE grant policies and procedures (mandatory for year 1 of funding cycle, minimum of one staff and fiscal officer);
- CSDE After School Grant Networking meetings for relevant professional development and networking opportunities, e.g. the CT Network for Children and Youth's Annual Fall After School Conference;
- Additional trainings that improve program safety and quality, such as CPR/First Aid, Mandated Reporter, and Medication Administration trainings
- NIOST Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT) for expectations of program quality and assessment;
- TransACT AS21 User Training for entering program and attendance information for State reporting.

Numbers Served

School Year 2023-2025: 3,714 total students served

Outcome Data

Student data is collected to measure the effectiveness of the grant program and to report biennially to the Connecticut General Assembly program impact on student achievement, school attendance and in-school behavior of student participants codified in C.G.S. section 10-16x(c) (g).

Grantees also provide qualitative data through annual surveys to report on the status and types of programming offered during the grant cycle. These reports highlighted programs achieving success in fostering academic growth, social connections, and family engagement. These included students building friendships, confidence, and community through activities like Girl Scouts and mentorship. Targeted academic support such as: Homework stations, teacher-led help, and tools like IXL that boost learning outcomes. Hands-on enrichment that engaged students in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM), arts, and sports programs that allowed students to explore new talents, and family engagement events such as multicultural nights and holiday festivals strengthened family ties to programs.

Additional Key Elements

(from the 2024 State After School Grantee End-of-Year Program Survey)

- **Holistic Development:** The combination of academic, social, and emotional support made the programs impactful for students and their families.
- **Intentional Planning:** Activities such as homework stations and targeted behavioral plans showed the importance of structured, intentional programming.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Events like multicultural nights highlighted the value of incorporating diversity and cultural learning into programming.
- **Sustainability:** Building trust and maintaining long-term relationships with families enhanced the programs' reputation and impact.