The Achievement Gap Is Real

“We can no longer afford to deny any child, let alone entire communities, the opportunity to learn, achieve and compete.”

Congressman Chaka Fattah, Pennsylvania

For Each and Every Child, Report to the Secretary of Education from the Equity and Excellence Commission, February 2013

NEW RESEARCH SHOWS Afterschool Is a Real Solution Linked to Closing the Gap

Afterschool Participation Narrows the Math Achievement Gap

Income differences in math achievement were eliminated for students who had consistent afterschool activities across K-5

New research demonstrates that more consistent time spent in afterschool activities during the elementary school years is linked to narrowing the gap in math achievement at grade 5.

What the data indicate:

» When afterschool participation is highly consistent, there is no gap in low-income and high-income children's math achievement at grade 5

» The more consistent the afterschool participation, the narrower the gap in math achievement

» The more rarely students participate in afterschool activities, the wider the achievement gap

Consistent participation in afterschool activities yields positive results.

1 More time spent expanding learning in afterschool = greater benefits for youth.²

Narrowed gap in math achievement
Greater gains in academic and behavioral outcomes
Reduced school absences

More time spent in afterschool is associated with:

- Better work habits
- Improved academic performance
- Gains in self-efficacy
- Improved GPA
- Increased attendance, fewer school absences

Unstructured time with peers in the after school hours is associated with:

- Lower GPA
- More school absences
- Greater misconduct
- Reduction in work habits and self-efficacy

Factors Linked to Positive Outcomes

2. When youth like their afterschool program, they show improvement in the classroom.\(^3\)

When youths report positive afterschool experiences, teachers report gains in the classroom.

- Better work habits
- Stronger task persistence
- Pro-social behavior with peers

3. Youth appreciate and need support from afterschool staff.

When youth report on their afterschool experience, emotional support from adult staff is the most significant factor leading to their positive assessment.

Embrace Expanded Learning & Afterschool for the Future of Our Youth

Young people need—and deserve—more from their education. High-quality afterschool and summer learning programs powered by school-community partnerships offer young people a variety of hands-on, engaging learning activities that build on the school day. The Expanded Learning & Afterschool Project is a 50-state initiative harnessing the power of networks and leaders to help schools and communities leverage the time beyond school to accelerate student achievement. The initiative connects you with research, resources and best practices for building affordable and sustainable approaches to expanding learning in your community.

Join the growing community of people committed to ensuring that all children have access to afterschool and expanded learning opportunities they need to succeed.

For more information visit the Expanded Learning & Afterschool Project at www.ExpandingLearning.org

Only 8.4 million children K-12 participate in afterschool programs. 18.5 million would participate if a quality program were available in their community.  (Afterschool Alliance, 2009)

Over 15 million school-age children are on their own after school. Among them, more than 1 million are in grades K-5.  (Afterschool Alliance, 2009)

Sign on as a supporter of the Expanded Learning & Afterschool Project and our principles

Stay informed about expanded learning events and opportunities

Sign up for our newsletter

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Deborah Lowe Vandell is the founding dean of the School of Education at the University of California, Irvine. An internationally recognized scholar on the effects of early child care, K-12 education, afterschool programs and families on children’s social, behavioral and academic functioning, Vandell has examined the effects of afterschool programs on academic and social outcomes. This work underscored the importance of out-of-school time as a factor in classroom success. In addition, Vandell developed an online assessment tool in use by the state of California to measure quality and student performance in afterschool and summer learning programs. Learn more about Vandell’s research and how to put it to use at www.afterschooloutcomes.org