

Good Morning,

My name is Tim Mulligan. I am the Principal of the Newark Street School in Newark Vermont which is one of seven schools in Kingdom East Unified Union School District. I would like to take a couple of minutes to share with you the reasons why we need to continue to support and expand afterschool programs for children throughout Vermont and the United States.

In Newark, we have an incredibly high quality afterschool program. The reasons for this are:

1. High quality staffing
 - a. Kingdom East Director of Afterschool Programming, Anne Hatch, oversees all school sites, hires and supervises high quality personnel, provides professional learning opportunities for staff, meets with site coordinators and school leaders regularly.
 - b. Site coordinator, Sue Winsor, has been in her position for 13 years. Has developed incredible relationships with community partners. Goal oriented. Ensures academic, SEL, family outreach, and safety initiatives and concerns are regularly considered and included in programming.
2. Academic goals - homework help, tutoring, communication with teaching staff, enrichment activities connected to STEM, Literacy, Humanities, and SEL.
3. Communication - continuous communication between the site coordinator and families. Lights On Program to showcase afterschool programming to the community. Surveys to gather feedback and inform decisions.
4. Exciting experiential enrichment opportunities that extend beyond the walls of the school. Balkan Chorus, Community Cooking, and Fishing are just three examples of many many opportunities for students.
5. High attendance rates. Nearly every student in the school is registered for afterschool (I think 65 out of 67 students). Nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of the students regularly attend. Why?

. Because of all the above and

a. Because the community depends on it. Many towns in the state are much like Newark. We are a town of about 500 people. The school is just about the only entity in the town. There is no daycare that the bus can drop students off at. Working families rely on the school to care for their children during afterschool hours while they are still at work. Without it, families might need to reconsider jobs, their work schedules or even ability to work. Some families would have children going home to empty houses. Data shows that this is the most unsafe time of day for children and adolescents when left unsupervised. However, students who are involved in organized, supervised activities during afterschool hours are far more likely to make good decisions, stay out of trouble, and be safe. I say this, but the benefits go well beyond this and link right back into the academic and Social/Emotional connections of the program.

6. All of the above doesn't happen without FUNDING - 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant. We must press the President of the United States and the rest of the Federal Government to continue to fund this program. Losing this grant will decimate our afterschool programs and severely impact our communities. Further, I hope that as a state we can recognize the importance of funding afterschool and ensure that we can care for ourselves even if our federal government does not. The Afterschool for All Grant Program was a great first step for us.

I commend the governor and the legislature of the State of Vermont for recognizing the value of a high quality afterschool program. Investing in the education, safety, and wellbeing of our children is critical and we will see the rewards of this investment in the years ahead. This investment today will significantly reduce the costs of the immediate and future consequences we would face for not caring for our children.