



NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA RANKED A “TOP 10 STATE FOR AFTERSCHOOL” BY AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE’S NATIONAL *AMERICA AFTER 3PM* SURVEY

Much Work Still Needs to be Done; Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence Statewide Quality Initiative: 478 Programs Pledge to Use Statewide Standards, 150 Sign Up as Test Sites for New Assessment Tool

PHOENIX, Ariz. (Oct. 16, 2014): Arizona was ranked a “Top 10 State for Afterschool” based on the largest national household survey ever conducted to gauge parent satisfaction and support for afterschool programs.

The Afterschool Alliance’s *America After 3PM* survey put Arizona as No. 6 in the nation based on responses indicating that 97 percent of Arizona parents are satisfied with their child’s afterschool program and 84 percent of Arizona parents support public funding for afterschool programs.

America After 3PM revealed that 178,554 children in Arizona, or 16 percent of all K-12 youth statewide, participate in an afterschool program, yet 318,223 children would be enrolled if a program was available to them.

California was the top-ranked state followed by Washington, D.C., Florida, Vermont, Massachusetts, Arizona, Oregon, Nebraska, Tennessee and Hawaii.

“Arizona has made great progress in creating out-of-school time opportunities for its children, and can be proud of that,” said Jodi Grant, executive director, Afterschool Alliance. “But there’s no question that more work remains. Most parents in the state who want their child in an out-of-school time program can’t find one that works for them, and that needs to change.”

To that end, 478 program sites statewide have signed the ***School’s Out, Make it Count Pledge*** committing their programs to use the Arizona Quality Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs introduced by the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence (AzCASE) and Valley of the Sun United Way in 2013 to strengthen delivery of services provided to youth. In addition,

150 programs throughout the state have agreed to be test sites for a new Arizona Quality Standards Assessment Tool that will grade out-of-school-time programs based on seven focus areas aligned with the Arizona Quality Standards for Out-of-School Time. Arizona is the 33rd state to have clearly defined expectations for what quality should look like in out-of-school-time programs.

“It’s great to finally have Arizona recognized for its support of youth statewide,” said AzCASE Executive Director Melanie McClintock. “Being ranked among the Top 10 states in the nation for out-of-school time underscores the importance finally placed on where our children are and how they are being supported and enriched when not in the classroom. Thirty-four percent of parents want more out-of-school time programming in the state and now with the quality standards and the assessment tool, we can make that happen.”

Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, a strong advocate for quality out-of-school-time programming, lauded AzCASE’s work in the state as critical for a child’s social and emotional development, as well as preparation for work.

“Research clearly shows the effects of these programs on a child’s overall development,” he said. “Through the City of Phoenix’s out-of-school-time programs, students have a great opportunity to learn the interpersonal skills they’ll need to help them succeed on the job.”

The *America After 3 PM* survey showed that 71 percent of Arizona parents agreed that out-of-school-time programs help youth gain workforce skills including teamwork, leadership and critical thinking.

Phoenix Union High School Superintendent Dr. Kent Scribner attested to the benefits of out-of-school time programming in increasing student engagement as measured by grades, performance and behavior.

“Quality out-of-school-time programs can be a meaningful extension to what is learned in school, inspiring youth to learn and develop the resiliency necessary for them to succeed in and out the classroom,” he said. “Research consistently shows that quality afterschool programs result in improved attendance, higher academic achievement, increased student engagement, higher self-esteem, reduced delinquency and greater likelihood of high school graduation.”

The data was collected by Shugoll Research which surveyed 37,720 households across the country, receiving 13,709 responses. In Arizona, 261 households completed in-depth interviews via the online survey.

To see survey results as they relate to Arizona, visit www.afterschool.org. For the complete survey, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org.

ABOUT THE ARIZONA CENTER FOR AFTERSCHOOL EXCELLENCE

The Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence is dedicated to improving access to high quality out-of-school learning opportunities for Arizona children and youth through professional development, advocacy and community capacity building. The Arizona Center is one of 47 statewide afterschool networks nationwide supported by the C.S. Mott Foundation. For more information, visit www.azafterschool.org.

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