



gaining at least three additional months of math skills in a year. Some 71% graduate from high school on time, compared to 59% of matched peers. Citizen Schools estimates the program costs about \$6,000 per student to participate and receive three additional school hours per day of instruction/enrichment activities over a one year period. We know that even the best programs don't have a 100% success rate, and there are always students who might have graduated on their own. Therefore, using Citizen Schools' own success rates and program costs, CHIP estimates their cost for a student to actually graduate (who otherwise wouldn't) as \$50,200. Compare that to an estimated \$623,000 in social welfare costs and lost income/tax revenue per high school dropout to understand Citizen Schools' 'bang for buck': a savings of over \$12 for every \$1 spent on the program.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can **donate any amount** to Citizens Schools at the national or state level. Or, you can get involved in other ways: Donors can support innovation and evaluation by funding new studies or pilot initiatives. Additionally, corporate partnerships enhance sustainability and allow scaling to new cities by providing a consistent supply of volunteer mentors.

PERSONALIZE THIS PROJECT

If Citizen Schools is not in your area, similar programs include **Spark** in middle school and **Genesys Works** in high school. Funders interested in policy can advocate for issues that Citizen Schools addresses, including extended learning time, quality Career and Technical Education (CTE), and rigorous curricula for all students. Organizations working on these issues include the **Association for Career and Technical Education** and **Jobs for the Future**, particularly the **Students at the Center** initiative.

MIDDLE/SECONDARY At this stage, students are much more independent and are making decisions that will affect their subsequent lives, in areas like school attendance, substance use, and relationships. Meanwhile, many students must overcome earlier gaps in learning to develop academic skills and "soft" skills like critical thinking and communication needed to be college- and career-ready. Early adolescence is the point that children decide who they are as learners and find paths that can lead to their goals. However, relatively few programs focus on middle schoolers. Connecting students to role models and mentors, supporting them in rigorous coursework, and incorporating real-world applicability can keep students engaged and on-track to high school graduation. Below we profile a nonprofit that improves low income students' engagement and achievement in middle school through mentorships and extended learning.

NONPROFIT MAKING AN IMPACT

Citizen Schools

WHAT IT DOES

Citizen Schools partners with 20 middle schools to enhance and expand the learning day for about 3,500 middle school students in eight urban districts in California, Massachusetts, New York, and North Carolina. Middle school interventions can capture students who might otherwise disengage by high school, as well as support them in the transition to high school. An additional three hours in the school day gives students time for homework, learning study skills, and experiential field trips.

Community volunteers teach elements of their professional experience, while AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows provide academic support. Each semester culminates with a community event called WOW! where students make presentations and teach back what they've learned to family and friends. Citizen Schools is a whole-school model: every student in the school receives the same services so that no students fall through the cracks.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS IT

Citizen Schools participants are more engaged and make greater academic gains in middle and high school than matched peers,