



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 14, 2022

Contact: Stephanie Van Koevering
517-974-6065
stephanie@reschstrategies.com

MI Afterschool Programs Honored by Leading Educational, Philanthropic Organizations

Woodhaven-Brownstown School District, Ypsilanti Community Schools Recognized Through “Beyond the Classroom” Awards

The Michigan Afterschool Partnership (MASP) today announced that two of the state’s top afterschool programs, operated by Ypsilanti Community Schools and the Woodhaven Brownstown School District, have been honored through the first-of-its-kind “Beyond the Classroom” awards program.

Administered by MASP and the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA) and funded by the Skillman Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the award grants \$7,500 to each recipient.

“Both of the programs we recognized have achieved tremendous success during the most difficult of times,” said MASP executive director Erin Skene Pratt. “Each was able to collaborate with community partners and leverage federal COVID-19 relief dollars to build high-quality learning opportunities for larger numbers of youth than ever before. Their work supported higher levels of academic and social-emotional growth than ever before, during a time of tremendous hardship and change.”

The Woodhaven-Brownstown School District collaborated with the City of Woodhaven’s Parks and Recreation Department to expand its local Summer Playground Program in 2021. The program was implemented free of charge in all five of the district’s elementary schools, and included—for the first time—food, transportation costs, and expanded learning opportunities.

“We wanted to remove barriers, and that involved becoming as collaborative and supportive as possible,” said district superintendent Mark Greathead. “Working together with our community and our fantastic team of educators, families and partners, we were able to address student needs for a much larger sector of our local population, with very compelling results.”

The expanded programming helped Woodhaven-Brownstown reach more than three times the number of students typically served with high-quality academic and social-emotional supports.

At Ypsilanti Community Schools, community collaboration is key to delivering effective out-of-school time programs for students. During summer 2021, the district offered its Grizzly Learning Camp in partnership with more than 18 local and national organizations, so the district's students could participate in any activity they could do, or wanted to do.

“We operated from an asset mindset,” said district superintendent Alena Zachery-Ross. “We made a conscious decision to ensure any student who wanted to attend could do so, and then we met them with the most engaging content we could find. Our goal was to ensure students were able to re-engage after the pandemic in ways that were positive, dynamic and fully supportive.”

The district's summer program had a 96 percent attendance rate, and a 98 percent favorable rating among those who took part.

The Michigan After-School Partnership champions statewide access to quality and equitable Out-of-School Time (OST) programs to ensure that all children and youth succeed. MASP has been aggressively advocating for statewide OST funding for community-based providers, who are playing a key role in helping re-engage students in their learning following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional information about MASP can be found at miafterschool.org.

#