



Whirlpool Brand Laundry Program Continues To Improve Student Engagement Despite In-Person Learning Challenges Brought On By The Pandemic

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Now in its sixth year, the Care Counts™ laundry program has grown to support nearly 40 regions in the U.S. BENTON HARBOR, Mich., Sept. 22, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- While most schools halted in-person learning during the 2020-2021 academic year due to COVID-19, the [Care Counts™ laundry program](#) by Whirlpool brand continued to be a resource for students with the help of school leaders and community volunteers. As a result, nearly 90 percent of participating high-risk elementary school students¹ enrolled in the program were reported by teachers to feel connected to their school during the 2020-2021 school year.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020-2021 academic year brought on significant challenges, including how the program would operate when in-person learning shifted to virtual classrooms. In order to help students who depend on the Care Counts™ laundry program, Whirlpool brand with support from Teach For America, worked with participating schools to find additional ways to ensure students had access to clean clothes, such as providing additional laundry pairs to a local firehouse and day care center when Summit Academy in Brooklyn could not open their doors to it's students. In analyzing the most recent data from the 2020-2021 school year:

- A total of 177 students/families participated in the Care Counts™ laundry program and were in regular contact with their school during the 2020-2021 school year – an average of nearly 15 students per school, which compared similarly to pre-pandemic enrollment.
- Nearly 64 percent of participating high-risk elementary school students² were not chronically absent following the Care Counts™ laundry program by Whirlpool implementation, despite the challenges of remote learning and the stressors of the pandemic.

"We're incredibly thankful for the school leaders and volunteers who went above and beyond to keep the program operational in many regions despite the challenges," said Laura Fletty, Communications Manager for Whirlpool brand. "It's humbling to know that the program continued to help the school community stay connected and that students across

many regions were still able to experience the benefit of access to clean clothes."

Now in its sixth year, the program has expanded to 134 schools in 36 states across the country and is providing access to clean clothes to thousands of students. The Care Counts™ laundry program by Whirlpool brand has expanded its presence to 16 new schools across five new states in the 2021-2022 school year: Idaho, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma and South Carolina. It will continue to work with schools that are participating in a second year of the program in five regions: Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Kentucky and Massachusetts.

In addition to the program's introduction into the five new states, Whirlpool brand recently announced an arrangement with Benton Harbor Area Schools to bring the program to the company's hometown. A first in the history of the Care Counts™ laundry program, students in every school within a district (Pre-K through high school) will now have access to the resource.

"Expanding the Care Counts™ laundry program to the entire Benton Harbor Area School District was incredibly important for Whirlpool brand," said Fletty. "We wanted to continue our commitment of providing access to clean clothes to all of the students living here in Benton Harbor and to see how the laundry program can impact our own community."

The Care Counts™ laundry program by Whirlpool brand is designed to remove one small but important barrier to attendance - access to clean clothes - by installing washers and dryers in select schools nationwide. Since its inception in 2015, the program has contributed to decreases in chronic absenteeism, and increases in attendance rates, grades and engagement levels among participating at-risk students.

To learn more about the Care Counts™ Laundry Program by Whirlpool brand, visit <https://www.whirlpool.com/care-counts>

About Whirlpool Brand

For more than one hundred years, Whirlpool brand has been inspired by how people care for their families. Whirlpool brand is designing home appliances that are focused on improving how families give and get the care they need with the latest technologies and innovations – whether that means flexible refrigerator storage for all types of family needs, induction technology for efficient cooking and easier cleaning, or laundry pairs that sense and adapt to clothes with the latest in connected technologies. Whirlpool brand created and continues outpacing goals of its Care Counts™ Laundry Program, through which the brand is committed to helping create educational equality by installing washers and dryers in schools to help remove one small but important barrier to attendance – access to clean clothes. Whirlpool brand is part of Whirlpool Corporation, a leading appliance manufacturer committed to being the best global kitchen and laundry company, in constant pursuit of improving life at home. For more information on Whirlpool, please visit whirlpool.com/everydaycare or find us on Facebook at facebook.com/whirlpoolusa or Twitter at [@WhirlpoolUSA](https://twitter.com/WhirlpoolUSA). Additional information about the company can be found at whirlpoolcorp.com.

1 High-risk elementary school students is defined as elementary students at risk of missing 10% or more days of school during a reporting period

2 High-risk elementary school students is defined as elementary students at risk of missing 10% or more days of school during a reporting period

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