

Enhancing School Reform Through Expanded Learning

January 2009

**Robert M. Stonehill
Learning Point Associates**

**Priscilla M. Little
Harvard Family Research Project**

**Steven M. Ross
Laura Neergaard
Lynn Harrison
James Ford
Center for Research in Educational Policy**

**Sharon Deich
Cross & Jofus, LLC**

**Emily Morgan
Jessica Donner
The Collaborative for Building After-School Systems**



THE COLLABORATIVE
for BUILDING
AFTER-SCHOOL
SYSTEMS

1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200
Naperville, IL 60563-1486
800-356-2735 • 630-649-6500
www.learningpt.org

Copyright © 2009 Learning Point Associates. All rights reserved.

3319_01/09

Acknowledgments

This work was made possible through the generous support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and we would like to thank An-Me Chung, the program officer responsible both for supporting this initiative and A New Day for Learning. We also thank The Atlantic Philanthropies for its generous support of the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems.

We would also like to thank the people who provided extensive guidance throughout the development of this report: Carol McElvain, Gina Burkhardt, Paula Corrigan-Halpern, and Carol Chelemer at Learning Point Associates; Lucy Friedman at The Collaborative for Building After-School Systems; Mary Bleiberg at The After-School Corporation; David Sinski at After School Matters; and Millicent Williams at the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation.

Partnership is a two-way street, and afterschool and summer programs are also likely to benefit from partnerships with schools. Partnerships with schools *can help afterschool and summer programs to:*

- Gain access to and recruit groups of students most in need of support services.
- Improve program quality and staff engagement.
- Foster better alignment of programming to support a shared vision for learning.
- Maximize resource use such as facilities, staff, data, and curriculum.

Finally, strong school-afterschool/summer partnerships *benefit students in important ways* beyond academic support. They can:

- Provide continuity of services across the day and year.
- Facilitate access to a range of learning opportunities.
- Share information about specific students to best support individual learning.

Given that the evidence is clear on the benefits of participation in afterschool and summer learning programs, why don't more schools and districts engage in expanded learning efforts that include afterschool and summer programming? The answer is really very simple: Forging partnerships is hard work. It takes time, resources, and a commitment from both sides to make it work. The next part of this brief offers a set of principles to help schools and districts forge sustainable school-afterschool partnerships and then points to specific expanded learning program features that support positive learning outcomes in the out-of-school hours.

How Can Schools Partner With Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs to Support Expanded Learning? Five Principles for Sustainable Partnerships

At the heart of successful expanded learning opportunities are sound, sustainable partnerships among afterschool and summer program providers and schools working together to support learning. Although partnership development does not happen overnight, over time, effective partnerships move from being transactional to transformative in nature (Enos & Morton, 2003). That is, partners move from operating as separate entities with separate goals and outcomes to working in conjunction with one another to create an expanded learning system with a shared vision, mission, and outcomes. Five principles support movement toward transformative, sustainable school-afterschool/summer partnerships:³

- A shared vision for learning and success, with explicit focus on supporting academics
- Blended staffing models that enable crossover among school, afterschool, and summer staff
- School-afterschool/summer partnerships at multiple levels within the school and district

³ These principles were derived through interviews conducted by the HFRP evaluation team with senior leadership of 11 of Atlantic Philanthropies' direct service grantees. Data were augmented by a literature review on partnerships and collaboration.

- Regular and reciprocal collection and sharing of information about student progress
- Intentional and explicit contrast between school and afterschool environments

Shared Vision for Learning and Success, With Explicit Focus on Supporting Academics

Successful expanded learning partnerships require a shared vision for learning, which acknowledges the roles of the school and the afterschool program in supporting and assessing student success. When school leaders share a vision for student success that considers students' physical, emotional, and social well-being in addition to academic outcomes, the partnership is more likely to be successful than when competing agendas operate during the extended day. A broader vision of learning helps schools to recognize nonschool supports as critical in redefining what students need to be successful; it also helps afterschool programs better understand what they need to provide to complement in-school classroom instruction.

Developing a shared vision needs to happen at the outset of a partnership effort. Partners need to establish shared expectations through such means as a Memorandum of Understanding or a purposeful, due-diligence meeting to determine the shared value proposition of the partnership. Other strategies include inviting key school and district partners to join afterschool program boards and having program staff participate in school leadership or governance teams.

Blended Staffing Models for Crossover Among School, Afterschool, and Summer Staff

A critical component of the success of expanded learning opportunities is hiring the right staff. From an afterschool and summer perspective, this means hiring staff who have legitimacy in the school building and who are skilled at building relationships with school staff. One way to do this is to hire licensed teachers, who “speak the same language” as school-day teachers, can substitute and consult in classrooms, and can participate in professional development activities. Hiring licensed teachers who also teach at a host school facilitates information sharing and forges connections with other teachers who might not otherwise make time for “outside” programs or services. From a school perspective, it means encouraging school-day teachers to consider working as part of an afterschool or summer learning team, on which they bring their content expertise to bear to support and reinforce the development of critical learning skills.

Expanded learning opportunities benefit from having a staff member, either employed by the school or the afterschool program or shared across both, whose primary responsibilities are to coordinate resources among partners, create learning plans for students based on those resources, and facilitate communications and relationship building. In addition to a designated staff member, expanded learning opportunities should encourage school and program staff alike to participate in governance and leadership committees as well as grade-level and content-specific teams in order to be fully integrated partners.

School-Afterschool/Summer Partnerships at Multiple Levels in the School and District

Relationships between schools and afterschool and summer programs are most effective when they occur at multiple levels and among multiple school personnel—with teachers, coaches, guidance counselors, secretaries, and janitors in addition to the principal. Multilevel partnerships

typical school day and school year. Because all children spend more time out of school than in school, programs that support children in the out-of-school hours are viewed by many as a key strategy for helping to narrow the achievement gaps.

The recent addition of powerful and influential voices in the field has also helped to propel this agenda, as follows:

- In June of 2008, a coalition of prominent educators and activists introduced the Broader, Bolder Approach to Education. This agenda is based on the belief that schools alone cannot close the achievement gaps highlighted by NCLB. The new coalition is seeking “to build working relationships between schools and surrounding community institutions” (Economic Policy Institute Task Force, 2008, p. 2).
- In January 2007, the Time, Learning, and Afterschool (TLA) Task Force, supported by the C.S. Mott Foundation, released a report titled *A New Day for Learning*. Built on the belief that critical learning happens both within and outside the traditional school day and school building, the report’s authors laid out a vision for educating children and youth that relies on a collaborative effort by schools, families, and community partners to create a seamless learning day (TLA Task Force, 2007). In November of 2008, the Mott Foundation announced grants to support two cities, Providence, Rhode Island, and San Francisco, California, to implement local New Day for Learning initiatives.
- In May 2008, the United Way of America announced that it would focus its giving and advocacy toward a 10-year goal of cutting the national high school dropout rate in half. With over 1,200 recognized affiliates across the country, United Way has a unique ability to support family, community, and school partnerships that promote better student outcomes by connecting in-school and out-of school supports (United Way of America, 2008).

In addition to these noteworthy efforts, President-elect Obama has called for an expansion of high-quality afterschool opportunities by doubling funding for the main federal support for afterschool programs, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, to serve one million more children (“Education: Expand,” 2008).

The support of these powerful champions, coupled with a growing number of expanded learning programs in states, cities, and districts across the country, have focused a spotlight on the role expanded learning opportunities can play in helping to support educational reforms and improvements.

Resources to Support Expanded Learning

Almost universally, communities are using a combination of public and private funding to support education reform efforts that connect learning inside and outside of the school day. For the most part, states, districts and individual schools that are expanding learning time have paid for these efforts by securing funding from public education budgets, a patchwork of other federal and state funds, local government programs, and by leveraging private resources from community partners and foundations (Deich, 2008).

Federal Funds

Many of the public sources that reformers rely on for expanding learning come from federal sources, including the following:

- **Title I.** Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged), most recently reauthorized under the NCLB Act, is the largest federal education program that supports disadvantaged children and youth. Title I funds are distributed to states and localities by formula to improve the academic performance of students who are failing or at risk of failing state standardized tests. Both districts and individual schools have discretion in how Title I funds are being used, and many are using Title I funds to help support expanded learning time, both inside and outside of the school day. For instance in Providence, Rhode Island, some of the district's Title I funds are being used to fund a coordinator at each middle school to connect students with community organizations providing afterschool programs. Many districts are also using Title I funds for summer school or other summer learning programs for students at risk of educational failure. In 2008, funding for Title I was \$13.9 billion⁶ (U.S. Department of Education, 2008a). It is not clear, however, how much of that funding supports expanded learning programs. In addition to funding through the basic Title I program (Part A), other Title I subparts also support expanded learning—most notably the Supplemental Education Services program.
- **Supplemental Educational Services.** The Supplemental Educational Services (SES) program, Section 1116e of the Title I program, provides additional academic instruction for eligible students in schools that have not met their goals with regard to state testing standards for three straight years. These services, which must be provided outside of the regular school day, include tutoring, remediation, and other educational interventions with the goal of helping more students to pass state tests. SES programs provide limited services to students—generally a few hours a week and rarely for the entire school year. Expanded learning programs are looking for ways to connect SES services to their initiatives. For instance, in Massachusetts several SES providers are working with Expanded Learning Time schools. This partnership allows schools and providers to take full advantage of the SES funding by aligning programming with other expanded learning activities. States can use up to 20 percent of Title I funds for SES and school choice, but it is likely that the amount spent on these services is much smaller due to low utilization of SES services (Zimmer, Gill, Razquin, Booker, & Lockwood, 2007).
- **Funding for School Improvement.** Section 1003(g) of the Title I program provides new funding for School Improvement grants. This funding enables states to support a variety of reform options for Title I schools that do not make adequate yearly progress for at least two consecutive years. States establish priorities for use of the funds and select which districts and schools will receive this funding. Authorized activities include the development and implementation of school improvement plans, professional development for teachers and staff, corrective actions such as instituting a new curriculum, and development and implementation of restructuring plans. These funds can support the integration of activities provided by community partners into the school day

⁶ Funding for 2009 is currently under a continuing resolution.

and expanding the school day and school year. The fiscal year (FY) 2008 budget for the School Improvement program included almost \$500 million⁷ (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2009). This funding is relatively new, and many districts are receiving their first grants for the 2008–09 school year. Given the flexibility in how these funds can be used, it is likely that they will become an important source for expanding learning and other school reforms.

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers.** The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program, authorized in Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, is the only federal education program dedicated to providing programming before and after-school and during the summer. This state formula grant program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic and enrichment opportunities for students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Schools in every state have 21st CCLC grants that support important pieces of their expanded time and learning strategy. In FY 2008, funding for 21st CCLC program was just over \$1 billion⁸ (U.S. Department of Education, 2008b).
- **National School Lunch Program: Afterschool Snacks.** This federal child nutrition program, one of the few remaining entitlement programs, provides funding for meals and snacks in afterschool, summer, and before-school programs.⁹ The federally subsidized meals and snacks often help attract children to out-of-school-time programs. Programs receive reimbursements for the cost of a healthy snack according to a schedule set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is estimated that afterschool programs receive approximately \$350 million annually in reimbursements from this program (“Estimated federal,” n.d.).
- **Americorps.** Administered by the Corporation for National Service, Americorps provides opportunities for 75,000 adults to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups. Americorps volunteers address critical needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security and other areas. In some states, nearly half of the Americorps members are working in schools or afterschool programs. Many expanded learning time programs utilize Americorps members to help manage and staff programs and to connect in-school and out-of-school learning. The 2008 budget for Americorps was approximately \$260 million.
- **Full Service Community Schools Program.** In 2007, Congress set aside \$5 million from the Fund for Improvement of Education (Title V, Part D of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) to establish the Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) program. An FSCS is a public elementary or secondary school that coordinates with community-based organizations and public/private partnerships to provide students, their families, and the community access to comprehensive services. The funding is awarded on a competitive basis to local education agencies and one or more community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or other public or private entity to help public elementary or secondary schools function as an FSCS (U.S. Department of Education,

⁷ Funding for FY 2009 is currently under a continuing resolution.

⁸ Funding for FY 2009 is currently under a continuing resolution.

⁹ Entitlement programs guarantee funding to every individual who meets established criteria.

2008c). In the fall of 2008, the first 10 grants were awarded to communities to expand and enhance community schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2008d).

- **The Summer Term Education Programs for Upward Performance Act.** The Summer Term Education Programs for Upward Progress (STEP UP) Act was authorized into law as part of the America COMPETES Act in the summer of 2007. STEP UP addresses the achievement gap among schoolchildren in Grades K–8 by establishing a pilot grant program to support high-quality summer learning opportunities for children in high-needs schools. This federal grant program supports six weeks of summer learning and enrichment, with curricula that emphasize mathematics, reading, and problem-solving skills aligned to the state’s academic content standards of school-year classes. State education agencies will be eligible to apply for funding under this program to provide summer learning grants for students in districts in their states. To date, no funds have been appropriated for this program.

In addition to the most commonly used federal funds identified above, many other federal sources can support programs in the out-of-school hours, including funding from the Child Care and Development Fund, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, Youth Opportunities grants, Social Services Block grants, Community Development Block grants, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, Juvenile Justice funds, Workforce Development funds, and funding for substance abuse prevention and obesity prevention. While districts and schools can use a variety of federal funds to support expanded learning, each program has its own purposes and comes with its own set of rules and requirements (Afterschool Investments, 2006). Aligning and coordinating multiple funds, where the original purpose was not expanded learning, generally make these funds harder to use effectively in the context of education reform.

State Funds

A growing number of states are also providing funding to expand learning, generally through afterschool and summer programs usually focused on supporting low-income children. The following states provide examples of this trend:

- **California**, through its After School Education and Safety Program (Proposition 49), is providing \$550 million for afterschool programs for low-income children in kindergarten through eighth grades. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to school districts and local partners (California Department of Education, 2008).
- **Kansas** is providing \$400,000 in grants for the Middle School Afterschool Activity Advancement Program that is designed to support academic enhancement and help middle school youth prepare for career and college opportunities during the school year and the summer. Grant funding is awarded on a competitive basis (Kansas State Department of Education, 2008).
- In **Connecticut**, the state provides approximately \$3 million to priority school districts for extended day programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2006).
- In **South Carolina**, the state is providing nearly \$7 million for Afterschool-School Program/Homework Centers to improve academic outcomes for children in schools that

are not making progress according to NCLB guidelines (South Carolina Department of Education, 2008).

- In **Oklahoma**, the state superintendent appointed a Time Reform Task Force (2007) that has proposed lengthening the school year by 15 instructional days to improve the quantity and quality of learning time.

In addition, lawmakers in Minnesota, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Utah and Washington are considering proposals to expand learning time (Collaborative for Building After-School Systems, 2008).

Local Funding

Many cities invest substantial amounts of local funds on programs that provide additional time for learning. These include efforts such as the Beacon program in New York City, a Saturday Scholars program in the District of Columbia, and a School-Age Child Care Program for elementary and middle school students in Palm Beach County, Florida. Most often, local funding comes from school district budgets, and city agencies. Not surprisingly, when funding comes through school districts, the main focus is supporting the academic needs of students. Programs supported with funding from city agencies such as Parks and Recreation, Community Development, or Police and Safety usually focus more on recreation and prevention activities, although a number of localities are working to infuse more academic content into city-sponsored programs. Local funds are also an important source of support for summer jobs programs for older children and youth. (Visit the National League of Cities website at www.nlc.org/iyef/education/afterschool/index.aspx for more information on local funding.)

Private Funding

In many communities, private funding is playing a critical role in supporting expanded learning. Private partners supply funding to encourage innovation; directly support programs; and help build systems to improve program quality, accessibility, and financing. This involves direct fundraising as well as providing essential direction through participation on boards and steering committees (Deich, 2008).

Private funding is also used to fuel innovation. Many initiatives, including New Hampshire's Supporting Student Success through Extended Learning Opportunities Program and Chicago's Community Schools (see Expanded Learning in Practice section) have relied on private money to support pilot sites and model development. After these new models have proven their value—often through evaluations funded with private donations—advocates have been able to seek additional funding, both public and private, to expand programming.

Likewise, private funding is also helping support program operations in many communities. Even in places where public funding is available to support expanded learning, program leaders indicate that available public money is usually not sufficient and that many programs also rely on private funding to help support programming. This is the case in the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time (see Expanded Learning in Practice section) schools as well as in many charter schools (Deich, 2008).

Finally, private funding is also behind much of the system-building work in cities and states. For example, the Wallace Foundation is supporting local intermediary agencies in five cities. These intermediaries are helping connect schools with out-of-school time opportunities that enhance learning (Wallace Foundation, 2008). Likewise, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation is helping support statewide afterschool networks in 38 states (visit www.statewideafterschoolnetwork.net for more information on the Mott-funded networks). These networks provide a state-level forum to advocate for additional funding to support more high-quality afterschool and summer programming. And private money from Atlantic Philanthropies is behind the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS). This group of local intermediary organizations from New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Providence and Washington, D.C. is conducting research, sharing promising practices, and supporting a public policy agenda for more high quality afterschool opportunities (visit www.afterschoolsystems.org for more information on CBASS).

Expanded Learning in Practice—Examples From the Field

The rethinking of time and learning is at the center of many education reform efforts at the state, district and building level. This section discusses how education reform models at state, district, and building levels are being structured and financed.

State Departments of Education

State departments of education have the ability to try out carefully crafted reform models at a scope and scale that can demonstrate effective practices. Through the design and funding of new models, they also have the ability to encourage partnerships with community organizations that help to blur the line between in-school and out-of-school learning. The following examples illustrate two different state approaches to education reforms that rely on expanded learning to improve opportunities and outcomes. While both of these initiatives are relatively new and serve only a small proportion of children in their respective states, they each hold the promise of more wide-scale reform.

- In 2005, the **Massachusetts** Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with Massachusetts 2020, launched the Expanded Learning Time (ELT) initiative. Believing that children, especially those at risk, need more time to achieve proficiency in the standards-based curriculum and that all children deserve the opportunity to experience enrichment programs such as the arts, music, and sports, the ELT initiative provides state funding and technical assistance to schools that extend their school calendar by at least 300 hours per year (Massachusetts 2020, 2009). As of fall 2008, 26 schools were implementing ELT. ELT schools receive an additional \$1,300 per child to pay for the expanded day from funds provided by the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.¹⁰ This extra time is used to provide additional instruction in core subject areas, as well as more time for teachers to plan and learn. Schools partner with community-based organizations to provide enrichment and

¹⁰ This does not include funding to support Massachusetts 2020 or other resources provided by community partners.

experiential learning opportunities. All ELT schools collaborate with partner organizations to bring additional programming into their schools. Partners help with programs that range from apprenticeships and mentoring to hands-on science and history lessons to athletic and arts classes. And the initiative is demonstrating results; the first cohort of schools participating in the ELT has made greater gains on state standardized tests than in past years (Annenberg Institute, 2008).

- In **New Hampshire**, the State Department of Education is changing its high school curriculum by introducing real-world learning as an integral part of students' experiences. Under the new program, *Vision for High School Redesign: Supporting Student Success through Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs)*, high schools can voluntarily implement extended learning opportunities as an alternative way to earn credit toward graduation. The vision of this initiative is to expand the options of the traditional high school classroom. In ELO schools, students of all abilities will have the option to learn in rigorous and relevant real-world settings and gain high school credit for that learning, based on demonstrated mastery of predetermined course-level competencies (New Hampshire Department of Education, n.d.). In the fall of 2008, students from seven high schools started earning credit for ELOs. The initiative—a partnership of PlusTime NH, the New Hampshire Department of Education, and the Concord Area Center for Education Support and QED (a local business)—is funded primarily by the Nellie Mae Foundation.

Local School Districts

Local districts are finding new and innovative ways to expand time for learning as part of education reform efforts. Sometimes reforms are districtwide, and sometimes they target particular schools or students. Many of these reforms are piloted at individual schools with the hope of scaling up successful practices to serve more students. Districts smooth the way for reforms at individual schools by garnering support and providing resources and technical assistance. The following examples highlight two different district approaches to expanding time for learning as a piece of their reform strategies:

- In the fall of 2008, the **Syracuse, New York**, school district began implementing a districtwide adoption of the Say Yes to Education (SYTE) model to increase the high school graduation rate and college entry of low-income students. The model supports students throughout their school careers by providing afterschool, summer school, tutoring, and mentoring for all children—“giving them whatever it takes,” in the words of one official. Students who graduate from a Syracuse High School are then eligible for fully paid college scholarships at a large group of participating postsecondary institutions. The program began this school year for kindergarten through third graders in six elementary schools. Additional grade levels and schools will join the program each year until all schools and students are covered. SYTE in Syracuse is a partnership between Syracuse University, the School District of Syracuse, and the Say Yes to Education Foundation. It is receiving new funding from the state, city, and the SYTE foundation to assist with start-up, but over time, as the initiative is expanded to more schools, the district will have to reallocate resources to expand and sustain the reform. (Visit cnycf.org/cnycf//tabid/161/Default.aspx for more information.)

- The **Chicago** public school system has invested in several initiatives to expand learning time that focus on providing both additional academic support and more enrichment. These include:
 - **A large Community Schools initiative.** Chicago Public Schools now has one of the largest community schools initiatives in the nation with 150 campuses. These community schools are true neighborhood hubs connecting the resources of diverse community partners to a range of activities including before-school and afterschool enrichment opportunities for students. Schools partner with at least one nonprofit organization and employ a full-time site coordinator who not only oversees and coordinates programming but also serves as the liaison among parents, students, school personnel, and the community. A public-private partnership with the school district and private partners supports this growing effort. (Visit <http://cpsafterschool.org/program/> for more information.)
 - **A summer enrichment program: Keep Kids Learning.** This comprehensive summer school program affords students in Grades 2–12 opportunities for academic, recreational, and social enrichment. The program enables schools offering mandatory summer school to enrich and expand their offerings into the afternoon period as well as expand services to students not required to attend summer school. Younger students enjoy an array of afternoon activities and regular field trips; older students spend the afternoon as “counselors,” earning money for working at elementary schools with Keep Kids Learning programs. Keep Kids Learning also employs teaching fellows—college students majoring in education—to provide more attention to individual students. In 2008, the program was offered in 20 elementary schools and two high schools, serving more than 3,200 students. School district funds support this program. (Visit <http://cpsafterschool.org/program/> for more information.)
 - **A community-based afterschool program for teens: After School Matters.** After School Matters is a nonprofit organization that partners with the City of Chicago, the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Public Library, the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, and Community-Based Organizations to expand out-of-school opportunities for Chicago teens. Named for the original Block 37 arts program that was housed on a vacant city block, the city’s innovative gallery37, science37, sports37, tech37, and words37 programs provide Chicago teens with engaging activities that develop skills to help get them ready for the workplace. This program is funded by coordinating city resources from partner organizations, and by raising funds from private sources including business and philanthropy. (Visit www.afterschoolmatters.org for more information.)

Individual Schools

Schools are also finding creative ways to add more time for learning to help struggling students. The following examples highlight a variety of approaches that public schools are using to provide additional time:

- **Barcroft Elementary School** in Arlington, Virginia, began a whole-school reform designed to better meet the needs of its students, many of whom are low income and English language learners. With the backing of parents and teachers, an entrepreneurial principal was able to win over the district and school board on the idea of modifying the school calendar. By shifting the traditional calendar to a year-round schedule, school staff minimized summer learning loss for students and limited burnout for the many students who attended summer school. The new schedule includes the same number of school days with several breaks interspersed throughout the school year. During these intersessions, students can choose from a menu of enrichment camps that infuse math and literacy into the lessons. Intersession activities are led by community partners, parents, and other professionals in the community. And all this is being done using current funding. By combining their basic school funding, Title I money, summer school funding, and an exemplary-projects grant from the district, Barcroft leaders are able to manage this new schedule with their current funding. This includes most of the cost of intersession programming. If a family is able to pay it, a \$50 fee is collected for a student's three weeks of intersession programming. While the program is still too new to determine results, the teachers, who helped design the program, believe that the new schedule is helping to improve learning.
- **Achievable Dream Academy** in Newport News, Virginia, is a unique partnership between Newport News Public Schools, the City of Newport News, and the local business and military communities. Achievable Dream Academy provides at-risk students in kindergarten through 12th grade an expanded learning program that includes year-round school for 8 hours a day, 180 days a year. The schedule includes three mandatory, 10-day intersessions where students participate in enrichment and accelerated activities or remediation work if necessary. The curriculum at an Achievable Dream Academy raises the level of expectations students have for themselves; intensive reading programs, accelerated math courses, and mandatory etiquette classes are just a few examples of the varied approaches to learning that underlie the school's philosophy. The school receives its regular public school allotment that covers core expenses. Additional funding from other sources—mostly the business community—covers the costs of all of the expanded time activities. In 2007, the business community raised \$1.5 million to support expanded learning at Achievable Dream Academy.

School-Community Partnerships: The Key to Success for Financing Expanded Learning

A growing body of research is pointing to the central role of partnerships between schools and community organizations in financing more time and learning. By pooling expertise and resources, schools and community partners are breaking down barriers between in-school and out-of-school learning and finding new ways to help students succeed at school and beyond. The following lessons and suggestions provide ideas for building or expanding school-community partnerships that support expanded time and learning initiatives.

Partnerships Take Time. Bringing schools and community partners together requires a significant time commitment both for start-up and for ongoing operations. Initiatives that had the luxury of a planning grant or a planning year indicated that it made a large difference for

NCLB Reauthorization—Potential Opportunities for Expanded Learning

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act authorizes many of the federal programs that are supporting expanded learning, including Title I, SES, 21st CCLC, and School Improvement fund grants. NCLB was scheduled for reauthorization in 2007, but agreement on a new bill was never reached; the law will remain in its current form until it is reauthorized.

Reauthorization provides an important opportunity to modify the law and to improve, change, add, or eliminate programs or requirements. Several of the proposed changes in 2007 draft legislation provide insights into the kinds of changes being considered that could bring additional funding for expanded learning, including the following:

- **Proposed Expanded Learning Time Demonstration.** The 2007 House proposal to reauthorize NCLB contained language and funding to implement an expanded learning time demonstration similar to the program already underway in Massachusetts. The bill included funding for new competitive grants to state and local education agencies to develop expanded learning time schools. The proposal called on schools and local education agencies to form partnerships with community-based organizations and other community partners to help schools expand learning time by at least 30 percent. A version of this bill was reintroduced in 2008 as Senate Bill 3431, The Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act of 2008.
- **Proposed Teaching Fellows for Expanded Learning and After-School Act of 2007.** Also introduced in 2007 was legislation to establish a highly trained National Service Corps to support expanded day and afterschool learning opportunities. The bill called for partnerships with school districts and community-based organizations to recruit and retain new educators and leaders to support expanded learning. This program would provide funding for an important piece of the infrastructure for connecting in-school and out-of-school learning. This legislation was also reintroduced in 2008 as House Bill 7154 with the same name.
- **Changes to the Supplemental Educational Services Program.** The Supplemental Educational Services (SES) program came into being as part of NCLB's focus on accountability. The timing of reauthorization has reignited discussions about the program's structure and function. Although many proposals called for significantly changing or eliminating this program, one group of proposals is calling for better ways to integrate SES into school reform efforts. This could provide additional opportunities to support expanded learning.

Case Studies

Emily Morgan
Jessica Donner

Collaborative for Building After-School Systems

PS 78 Anne Hutchinson School, Bronx, New York

Overview

PS 78 Anne Hutchinson School, located in the Bronx, New York, is a Title I elementary school serving 780 students in Grades K–5. The student body is 80 percent black, 17 percent Hispanic, and 3 percent white or other. Approximately 90 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Over the past four years, PS 78 has partnered with the national nonprofit Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL) and The After-School Corporation (TASC) to provide afterschool services for 150 students. Principal Claudina Skerritt developed an afterschool program to provide students in need of academic supports with additional learning opportunities. Since 2004, PS 78 has made significant achievement gains on local and state assessments and has advanced from a school in need of improvement to one in good academic standing.

Partnership History

After PS 78 was designated as a school in need of improvement for failing to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) two years in a row, Principal Skerritt partnered with BELL to operate an afterschool program as a strategy to boost student achievement. She targeted BELL because of its longstanding history providing high-quality literacy and math tutoring programs. Principal Skerritt also partnered with TASC to help support the afterschool program by identifying funding opportunities, expanding enrichment options for students, and providing professional development and site-based trainings for afterschool staff.

Program Design

The afterschool program operates five days a week from 2:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and provides a breadth of academic and enrichment activities including homework help, tutoring, art, dance, and sports. PS 78 employs a full-time site coordinator who serves as a liaison between the school, BELL, and TASC to coordinate trainings, communicate results, and align afterschool programming to in-school instruction. Principal Skerritt meets regularly with the site coordinator to connect afterschool programming with current school initiatives in an effort, as she puts it, “to create continuity, where the boundary between the school-day and afterschool cannot be distinguished” (personal communication, December 16, 2008).

Multiple funding streams have supported the afterschool program at PS 78 over the past four years, as follows:

- As a school in need of improvement, PS 78 parents chose to dedicate Supplemental Educational Services (SES) funds to support afterschool programming.
- With support from The After-School Corporation, PS 78 received a 21st CCLC grant to expand the program to five days a week.

- Title I funds from the school budget mitigated the loss of SES funds when PS 78 was no longer in needs-improvement status.

In fall 2008, TASC, the New York City (NYC) Department of Education, and the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development selected PS 78 with BELL as a site for the Expanded Learning Time/ New York City (ELT/NYC) pilot initiative. ELT/NYC is testing the feasibility of expanding learning time by 30 percent at 10 New York City schools. Through ELT/NYC, PS 78 has expanded its afterschool programming, now serving 300 students, and is making more explicit connections between the learning before and after 3 p.m.

Impact

The partnership among PS 78, BELL, and TASC has contributed to overall school improvement. According to Principal Skerritt, “Our afterschool program is a major asset to help students perform at grade level in reading and math.” Afterschool has also been incorporated into the school’s comprehensive educational plan as a strategy to improve student academic performance. Since the implementation of the afterschool program, PS 78 has made consistent academic gains on local and state assessments, as follows:

- Upgraded from a school in need of improvement to one in good standing in 2007 for making AYP in English language arts and math.
- Identified as one of the state’s “rapidly improving and recognized schools” in 2006–07 by the New York State Department of Education.
- Improved learning environment in the area of academic expectations. (NYC Department of Education, 2008).

Looking Forward

The partnership with BELL and TASC has provided children at PS 78 with high-quality academic support and enrichment in their afterschool program. However, the challenge remains to broaden the reach of afterschool services. In the 2007–08 school year, the afterschool program had a waiting list of over 400 students, and there are over 150 students on the waiting list for this school year. “We constantly ask ourselves whether we are serving enough students,” David Inigo, the afterschool coordinator, explains, “but it is difficult to expand our program given the current budget limitations.”

Budget constraints, compounded by a reduction in resources as the school’s performance has improved, have required school administrators to think strategically about funding support. Principal Skerritt, committed to maintaining the momentum of afterschool programming over the past three years, has actively pursued diverse revenue streams identified by the School Grant Committee, which researches and applies for external funding opportunities. Principal Skerritt also has developed strategic partnerships with community-based organizations that complement the school’s mission and have the capacity to assist with grant writing. “We have been fortunate in bringing together multiple funding sources to support our after-school program,” she explains, “but that has meant making difficult budgetary decisions and working smarter to create these opportunities.”

Lantana Elementary School, Palm Beach County, Florida

Overview

Lantana is a K–5 elementary school located in Palm Beach County, Florida, with an afterschool program that serves nearly half of its 457 students. The school is 27 percent Hispanic, 38 percent black, and 35 percent white or other. Already a strong believer in the power of afterschool, Principal Elaine Persek was eager to capitalize on the existing Beacon program when she arrived at Lantana Elementary in 2005. Principal Persek has worked closely with her staff and forged a partnership with Prime Time Palm Beach County to expand afterschool services. Over the past three years, Lantana has made AYP and improved school climate.

Partnership History

Principal Persek works closely with staff from the Beacon Center, Prime Time, and partnering community-based organizations to provide afterschool services and enrichments for students. This collaboration has contributed to improved sustainability and program quality. The Beacon Center, which promotes the school as a hub of the community for academic, social, recreational, and cultural activities, supports the cost of participation of approximately one third of the students in afterschool. Lantana’s partnership with Prime Time improves program quality through targeted technical assistance and professional development sessions for the Beacon and afterschool directors. Ensuring youth participate in engaging activities that provide exposure to new experiences, Prime Time also serves as a clearinghouse for enhancement enrichment activities, such as technology workshops, hands-on environmental science projects, and newspaper journalism operated by community-based organizations.

Program Design

Lantana’s afterschool program serves approximately 200 students each year from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., five days a week. The first 90 minutes are dedicated to academic support including homework help, individual tutoring, science and literacy enrichment, and a comprehensive academic enrichment program called Champs, funded through Prime Time. Following academic enrichments, through the partnership with Prime Time, youth participate in CADRE, an arts and cultural enhancement program run by the Center for Creative Education. CADRE provides high-quality creative arts experiences for students including line dancing, silk-screen painting, sculpting, yoga, and thematic end-of-program performances.

Impact

Principal Persek believes the academic enrichment emphasis of the afterschool program and strong ties between in-school and out-of-school programs have contributed toward the following recent accomplishments by Lantana:

- Improved from a grade of a “C” to an “A” in 2006/07 and “B” in 2007/08, demonstrating increased numbers of students meeting reading and math standards (Florida Department of Education, 1999–2008).
- Made AYP in 2006–07 for the first time since 2002.
- Improved behavior and attitudes of students during the school day as well as increased teacher expectations for students (personal communication, November 24, 2008).

- Attendance during the school day improved, in part due to the Beacon parent liaison who calls parents when students are absent (personal communication, November 24, 2008).

Looking Forward

Lantana has been successful in addressing a common challenge for afterschool programs: aligning afterschool programming with in-school instruction. According to Principal Persek, “We truly operate in a seamless environment—one that doesn’t look at afterschool as a separate piece, but rather as an integral part of the whole school experience.” A key aspect of this coordination is the full-time afterschool director, Denise Sasiain, who reports directly to the school principal and runs all aspects of the program, including budgeting, staffing, and programming. She meets with the principal and the Beacon director twice a month to discuss the program and ways to connect in-school and out-of-school time. As Principal Persek explains, “We want our afterschool program to remain distinct from, but build upon, what students learn during the school day through engaging and worthwhile activities” (personal communication, November 24, 2008).

In the future, Lantana would like to expand the reach of its afterschool program to involve all students who want to participate. Many of the parents at Lantana cannot afford to pay for the afterschool program. Family Central, a nonprofit organization, provides a strong model for cost-sharing, by subsidizing a portion of the program fees based on family income. “We would love to expand the number of children that we serve in our afterschool program,” explains Afterschool Director Sasiain, “but that means figuring out creative ways to subsidize the program fees.”

Wendell Phillips Academy High School, Chicago, Illinois

Overview

Wendell Phillips is a small neighborhood high school serving approximately 800 students in Chicago. Ninety-eight percent of students are African-American, and 90 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Through Principal Euel Bunton’s commitment to develop partnerships with After School Matters, Centers for New Horizons, and additional community-based organizations, the scope, quality and coordination of afterschool opportunities has improved over the past six years. Phillips was selected as a Transformation High School in 2007, and through this initiative, Arne Duncan, Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer, identified the After School Matters program as a school improvement strategy.

Partnership History

As a Community School and through its partnership with the nonprofit After School Matters, Phillips provides a wide range of afterschool programs to reach nearly one half of the student body. Since 2003, After School Matters has operated afterschool apprenticeships led by the Chicago Park District, independent instructors, and community-based organizations in which teens take part in engaging activities that provide skills that translate to the workplace. With additional funding from the Community Schools initiative, Centers for New Horizons serves as the lead community-based organization providing academic and social service programs.

Program Design

The Phillips afterschool programs are specifically designed to meet the academic, social, and developmental needs of high school youth. Students choose from multiple program options that build career and college readiness skills and that complement Phillips' strong college preparation focus. After School Matters apprenticeship programs offer youth the opportunity to advance their mastery of skills by learning from experienced professionals and to investigate careers in the fields of technology, sports, arts, and communications. The 10-week apprenticeships are hands-on, interactive programs in which youth can explore different career paths and develop marketable skills in areas such as technology, lifeguarding, and documentary filmmaking.

Centers for New Horizons coordinates with other community partners to provide additional afterschool services. To support students' academic development and provide exposure to postsecondary options, Centers for New Horizons provides mentoring and tutoring services as well as college tours and job-shadowing opportunities. Students also participate in a wide range of services that support their social and emotional development including dance, art history courses, and leadership development workshops.

Impact

According to Principal Bunton, afterschool programs have played a role in advancing overall school performance:

We started with changing the school culture to create an environment that puts a premium on education, with the belief that this would translate into improved student outcomes. Students now feel that they are engaged in worthwhile activities and that they are prepared for life after graduation. Our afterschool programs have really helped these students realize that obtaining a high school degree is essential.

As an indication of how afterschool services have contributed to improved school performance, over the past few years attendance rates have increased from 72 percent to 76 percent, and chronic truancy has decreased from 25 percent to 12 percent (Chicago Public Schools Office of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability, 2008). Graduation rates increased from 39 percent in 2001 to 70 percent in 2005, and college admissions have risen from fewer than 10 in 2001 to 68 in 2005 (Centers for New Horizons, 2006). In addition, student behavior has improved as fewer students have been suspended or expelled.

Looking Forward

Principal Bunton is working to further connect afterschool to the school-day curriculum. Strategies to strengthen alignment between in-school and out-of-school time include the following:

- Holding monthly leadership meetings with school administrators, community-based-organization partners, and staff from After School Matters and Centers for New Horizons.
- Adapting afterschool programs to meet the needs of the school.

- Building on Phillips’ STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) focus, ASM contracts with community organizations and city agencies to advance program options in information technology and health careers.
- Appointing teacher liaisons who identify needs of specific students and communicate them to afterschool staff.

Principal Bunton acknowledges that while the program has made significant progress in providing a broad range of enrichment experiences for youth, the school and its partners continue “to work hard to create a system of afterschool services that support students’ academic, social, and emotional growth and are available to all students from the day they arrive at Phillips to the day they graduate.”

Roger Williams Middle School, Providence, Rhode Island

Overview

Roger Williams is a Title I middle school in Providence, Rhode Island, with 744 students. As part of the Providence After School Alliance’s (PASA) citywide initiative to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of afterschool programming for school-age youth in Providence, Roger Williams is one of three anchor schools for a wide range of afterschool programs in the South Side/West End AfterZone.¹¹ While Roger Williams struggles to make AYP, its partnership with PASA, city agencies, and community-based organizations to expand afterschool services has contributed to improved school performance.

Partnership

The partnership with PASA has played a critical role in improving the scale and quality of afterschool services at Roger Williams, currently reaching more than 360 youth in 45 different programs. Funding and staffing support from PASA has provided resources to expand academic and enrichment program options and double the number of participants. PASA also improves program quality by supporting partnerships with high-quality providers that include community-based organizations, individual instructors, the school district, and the local police department.

Program Design

The program model at Roger Williams reflects the developmental needs of middle-grades youth as well as competing interests of teens. Activity choice is the keystone of the program. Students select from a wide range of programs presented in a manner that simulates a college course catalogue. The programs are based in experiential learning and take place at both school and community-based locations. Hands-on enrichment activities that help students make connections to their academic learning as well as the community and world around them include explorations of the bay, food and fitness, pets and vets, dancing and drums, woodworking, martial arts, ceramics, and others. To directly support academic growth, each student participates in Club AfterZone each day in addition to their enrichment activity. Club AfterZone is an hourlong

¹¹ AfterZones are neighborhood campuses that connect communities and afterschool providers to promote high-quality expanded learning time opportunities for middle-grades youth.

session in which students can receive homework help or take part in reading enrichment, academic games, and hands-on science and math activities.

Sustaining a high level of program quality is critical to maintaining student engagement. As one youth asserts, “I would walk a mile for a quality program, but I wouldn’t walk across the street for a bad one” (Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 11). To this end, PASA oversees a quality improvement and capacity building agenda that includes use of a quality assessment tool, ongoing professional development, program observation, and customized technical assistance.

Impact

Principal Moseley views the afterschool program as a key strategy to drive school improvement and gives credit to the program for improved student attendance and behavior. Accomplishments include the following:

- Improved school day attendance from 86 percent to 92 percent in part due to AfterZone policy requiring school-day attendance for participation in afterschool (personal communication, December 9, 2008).
- Improved on-time grade promotion (personal communication, December 9, 2008).
- Improved test scores, meeting 25 of 26 Rhode Island English language arts and math targets in 2008 compared to meeting 18 targets in 2005 (Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

Demonstrating the principal’s commitment to high-quality expanded learning time, the after-school program has been incorporated into the school’s improvement plan. According to Principal Moseley, “Our students have shown tremendous growth over the past three years, so we want to recognize the impact of the AfterZone and work to institutionalize this type of comprehensive afterschool programming.”

Looking Forward

Over the past three years, Principal Moseley has been working to strengthen the link between in-school and out-of-school learning. This goal has been supported at a district level by afterschool coordinators assigned to each middle school across the city who track attendance and communicate student-specific information from school-day staff to afterschool providers. Also furthering alignment citywide, support from the Mott Foundation as part of the New Day for Learning initiative will build stronger systemwide connections between the AfterZone and school day to create a more seamless day for learning at Roger Williams and the six other middle schools in Providence.

