

# The Collaborative for Building After School Systems: Designing OST Systems for High School Students

## INITIATIVE FOUR

### GOAL:

To increase the appeal and relevance of after-school programs for high-school aged youth.

### RATIONALE:

In order to improve academic outcomes for adolescents, especially low-income students of color, after-school system builders must have a better understanding of how effective after-school programs are able to engage and support teenagers over an extended period of time. They must also understand the way that these programs, in alignment with high school reform efforts, can help teens succeed socially and academically.

The needs of teenagers are currently not being met by either schools or after-school providers. For every 100 American youth who enter 9th grade, only 68 will graduate within four years, and only 18 will have a college degree six years after graduation. Youth who do not participate in after-school activities are more likely to be “D” students, use drugs, and become parents than teens who do. Yet 40% of high-school youth do not attend after-school programs because they are not interested in the activities being offered. After-school system builders must find ways to engage these youth in programs that will prepare them both for the workforce and for high-school graduation.

### STRATEGY:

To ensure that after-school systems serve high-school youth more effectively, CBASS partners will host two national convenings, funded by The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, that will bring together school and after-school leaders and high school reformers to consider existing opportunities and build new alliances to improve outcomes for youth. These conferences will target cities that are piloting innovative models to align high school reform and after-school programs.