

THE COLLABORATIVE
for BUILDING
AFTER-SCHOOL
SYSTEMS

After-school is part of the solution:

Expand high-quality after-school and summer opportunities for high school students



Of incoming ninth graders, a third will drop out, while another third will graduate without college and work readiness skills.¹ The need to engage and sustain more young people through high school and post-secondary success is urgent. The education system strives to help students succeed academically and develop to their fullest potential, but schools can't do it alone. High-quality after-school and summer programs can bolster young people's engagement in school and improve their chances to graduate and achieve success in college and careers. Unfortunately, in our most underserved communities, high schools are too often overlooked when it comes to after-school support and funding. We must ensure that high school students receive their fair share of after-school opportunities through better policies and increased resources.



High school after-school is not the same as elementary after-school

High school students are able to “vote with their feet” and therefore, to keep them coming to after-school programs, require different strategies, activities, and supports than elementary and middle school students. With competing demands on their time – sports, clubs, jobs, family responsibilities – high school students require high-interest experiences such as leadership and community service opportunities, work experience, academic credits and stipends. Core principles of high-quality high school after-school programs include:



- High expectations for youth and opportunities for leadership and exploration of new talents and skills
- Tangible rewards and explicit high-interest experiences
- Curricula that encourages mastery of transferrable workplace skills, reflection, complements school day instruction, and increases young people's commitment to learning
- Partnerships with community-based organizations, colleges and universities, cultural institutions, and businesses
- Supportive relationships with caring, well-trained adults



High school after-school has a track record of success

Evaluators have found that students in high-quality programs achieved positive academic and social outcomes, such as improved attendance, grades, graduation rates, college acceptance rates, and self-esteem.



- A 2007 study by the University of Chicago found After School Matters (ASM) participants were 2.7 times as likely to graduate from high school than similar nonparticipating students.²



¹ Alliance for Excellent Education (2008). No Child Behind Reauthorization. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. www.all4ed.org/federal_policy/NCLB_ReAuth

² Goerge, R.; Cusick, G.; Wasserman, M.; & Gladden, R.. (2007). *After-School Programs and Academic Impact: A Study of Chicago's After School Matters*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago.

- Chicago Public Schools reports that ASM participants with a GPA above 3.0 enroll in college at a higher rate than district counterparts, particularly for Latino students.³
- Students in programs supported by The After-School Corporation passed more Regents exams and earned more high school credits than nonparticipants, and showed significantly more positive school attendance after a year of participation.⁴
- The New Hampshire Extended Learning Opportunities Initiative found a persistent decrease in dropout rates among participating New Hampshire schools who apply the initiative with fidelity and rigor.
- Blair High School in Pasadena, California increased its on-time graduation rate by 28% in the last four years, in part due to academic supports such as embedding tutoring into sports and enrichment activities, as well as credit recovery, provided by the BlairLEARNS program.⁵

Coordinated systems are necessary to ensure youth have access to high-quality programs

After-school providers need a coordinated system of support to meet their goals and help all students achieve. They often lack sufficient resources, training, and knowledge of effective strategies.

Intermediaries play a critical role in bringing high-quality after-school to scale by:

- leveraging and rationalizing resources
- providing training and technical assistance
- facilitating sharing of resources and knowledge across communities,
- holding programs accountable to results
- directing funds quickly and effectively to a wide range of programs.

About the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS)

The Collaborative for Building After-School Systems is a partnership of intermediary organizations dedicated to increasing the availability of quality after-school programming by building citywide after-school systems. Our mission is to make after school part of the essential services that support children and youth, and to promote the development of quality after-school systems nationwide. Partners include: After School Matters, Baltimore's Safe and Sound Campaign, Bay Area Partnership for Children and Youth, Boston After School and Beyond, DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, Prime Time Palm Beach County, Providence After School Alliance, The After-School Corporation, and The After-School Institute.

For more information, please visit: www.afterschoolsystems.org

³ Statistic from Chicago Public School Department of Career and College Preparation

⁴ Reisner, E.; White, R.; Russell, C.; & Birmingham, J. (2004). *Building Quality, Scale and Effectiveness in After-School Programs*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates.

⁵ Blair International Baccalaureate High School. (2007) *2006-2007 BlairLEARNS High School Program Data Points*. Pasadena: CA: Blair International Baccalaureate High School.