

Quality
Afterschool
Partnerships
Project



Guide to Quality Afterschool Partnerships

*Case Studies of Effective ASES & 21stCCLC Partnership Models in California
and Selected Practical Tools from the Field*

Maria del Pilar O'Cadiz, Ph. D.

Perry Chen, Ph. D.

Steve Amick

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About LCAP

The League of California Afterschool Providers convenes and coordinates the State’s largest After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program grantees for the purpose of informing policies and administrative decisions that affect the after school field.

These grantees manage over 60% of the State’s after school program sites and are dispersed among all eleven of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association regions. A group of this size is large enough to represent a broad constituency while remaining small enough to be effectively mobilized.

Those who are engaged in the daily management and operation of after school programs are the first to recognize the logistical implications of proposed policies and procedures. They are also the ones most qualified to determine when adopted policies have become counter-productive.

Likewise, they have the greatest potential for offering workable solutions to problems and innovative strategies for addressing service gaps. They represent the primary stakeholder group in the implementation of after school services, and as such should act as the primary consultants to policy makers on that issue.

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I. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

ROAD MAP

This guidebook is organized into three sections and includes four appendices, with an emphasis on providing readers with easy-to-use and practical information on establishing and growing quality afterschool partnerships.

Section I: Introduction & Methodology

In the first section, we present a brief background on the increasing role of Community Based Organizations (CBO) working in partnership with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), such as school districts and cities, in the California afterschool field and consider the emerging need for clear, useful, and targeted technical support for CBO/LEA partnerships to grow and be effective. We also present a review of the methodology used to collect data and materials for the partnership case studies and tools featured in subsequent sections.

Section II: Types of Partnerships, Major Findings, and Problems/Solutions

In the second section, we begin with a *typology* of the main types of partnerships between CBOs and LEAs across California programs. Next, we present key findings from our in-depth interviews and discussions with a range of partnerships throughout the state. Finally, we launch the “quick chart” of common problems and practical real-life solutions gathered from this initial look at successful partnerships [featured in Appendix A]. This tool template has the potential to become a robust online “wiki” resource for practitioners to share their stories and ideas.

Section III: Case Studies of Partnership Models

This section includes 9 case studies of a range of partnership models. These 9 case studies—and 6 additional case studies featured online—illustrate how different kinds of CBO/LEA collaborative configurations successfully function around a shared objective of providing quality programs for youth.

APPENDICES

The appendices provide information from the *Quality Afterschool Partnership Project* (QASPP) inquiries, interviews, and discussions with CBO-LEA partnerships across California. The appendices organize the wealth of information gathered in various easy reference formats:

Appendix A—Problems & Solutions Chart, an afterschool partnership database prototype, features samples of effective practices for addressing common issues and problems gathered from the QASPP case studies.

Appendix B—List of various tools and resources collected from the partnership case studies that may be adapted for implementation by other afterschool partnerships. Resources available online at www.afterschoolleague.org,

Appendix C —Presents the literature review, examining the current landscape and knowledge base on effective CBO-LEA afterschool partnerships and a range of online support materials.

Appendix D— Includes samples of the QASPP Nomination Form and Interview Protocols used with LEA and CBO representatives whose practices informed Section II and partnership stories are featured in Section III as well as online.

BRIEF BACKGROUND—AFTERSCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS IN CALIFORNIA

In the late 1990s, the establishment of the Federal 21st Century Community Learning Center program (21st CCLC) marked the beginning of the modern afterschool movement – providing seed money, leveraged opportunities, and program access to millions of young people across the country. During that period, California emerged to take a national leadership role, establishing one of the country’s first statewide afterschool initiatives with the After School Learning and Safe Neighborhood Partnerships Program (1998). With the passage of the landmark Proposition 49 (2002), this legislated categorical program was renewed indefinitely by the California electorate and renamed the After School Education and Safety Program (ASES) which expanded the state allocation to \$550 million for afterschool program funding in addition to the \$130 million in federal 21st CCLC funds the state receives. ¹

As the afterschool movement enters its next phase of development and the field expands to serve even more youth, the nature and quality of *community-school partnerships* becomes increasingly important—particularly for making critical advances in program quality and youth outcomes. Over these past two decades, the California afterschool field has matured dramatically with the efforts of many outstanding community based organizations (CBOs). These agencies have ranged from some large and longstanding youth-serving agencies (such as YMCAs, Girl Scouts, and Boys and Girls Clubs) to small and newer local non-profits with grassroots origins in the communities that they serve.

From the beginning of California’s public grant programming, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and their community partners have been incentivized to establish formal working relationships because “community partnerships” were intended by the original legislation. The logic behind this intent was that official partnerships would enhance the *range and quality* of afterschool services that schools alone would otherwise be unable to offer students.

¹ For an overview of California’s public afterschool funding history go to: *Mapping California Afterschool Landscape* on the California AfterSchool Network website: http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/ca_landscape. Also for a list of current 21stCCLC and ASES grantees go to the CDE Before and After School website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ba/>

HELPING CBO-LEA PARTNERSHIPS—THE NEED FOR TARGETED AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT

The *Quality After-School Partnerships Project (QASPP)*—a project of the League of California Afterschool Providers (LCAP) with support from The David & Lucile Packard Foundation and The William T. Grant Foundation—evolved out of an initial effort to understand the most pressing afterschool issues in the context of California’s rapid statewide expansion (subsequent to the full funding of Proposition 49 in 2006). What do CBOs and LEAs really need to improve their programs and their working relationships? Why do some partnership models work for one school or partnership arrangement, but not another? How does the current technical assistance field help programs succeed, and where are the continuing gaps in support?

In particular, advocates and service providers in the field identified a growing concern for how CBOs participate in the delivery of ASES and 21st CCLC programs and the technical assistance resources currently available to help them. Early conversations with leaders representing a wide range of afterschool CBOs presented a set of high-priority needs and gaps in the world of support summarized in the table below.

Table 1. Partnership Support Needs and Gaps

	Support NEEDS & GAPS for CBO-LEA Partnerships	QASPP GUIDE Addressing NEEDS & GAPS
1	– California has a vast range of CBO-LEA afterschool partnerships that face different problems and challenges.	– MAPS OUT the major different types of “Partnerships Models” that exist
2	– Best Practices (strategies, tools, tips) are often published and distributed as “one size fits all.”	– IDENTIFIES and DISTRIBUTES effective strategies and tools that are TARGETED to the specific types of “Partnership Models”
3	– Literature and Support about Partnerships is often about general principles and initial set-up themes.	– Focuses on technical advice and support that are PRACTICAL for on-the-ground, daily operations of actual programs and services

More than a decade of publicly funded afterschool program expansion in California has resulted in a wide variety of partnerships between CBOs and LEAs. Consequently, their challenges may vary significantly (e.g., the problems of small rural CBOs trying to start new programs will naturally differ from the large multi-site urban CBO that has been running programs for years). While some set-up guides or technical assistance providers may offer solutions that fit one partnership, often the strategies that are applicable for one may not be helpful for another. Several technical assistance efforts have collected “best practices from the field” and distributed them; however, mapping out the types of partnerships and then tagging the practices to the type is considered here as a critical *preliminary step* to make the pool of “best practices” more useful for the frontline field.

Further, as evidenced in this document’s review (Appendix C), the current literature on community partnerships in afterschool programs mostly offers a list of recommended steps in initiating partnerships or practices that will guide stakeholders in coming together. These present important guidance on issues ranging from creating a common vision and mission to designing program models to developing service agreements and other logistical and organizational capacity building steps.² It is rarer to find literature or guidebooks that reflect how partnerships actually work within the context and complexities of day-to-day operations. How do different partners each manage a comprehensive afterschool program that meets California’s state and federal requirements and works effectively to serve the needs of diverse students in varied school districts across the state?

This Guide to Quality Afterschool Partnerships is an effort to address these gaps in the support field. The *Quality After School Partnerships Project* represents an effort to learn from the diverse experiences of California’s afterschool field in order to create and disseminate practical tools and strategies for building quality partnerships for quality programs. With an online component (e.g., wiki), the framework presented in this guidebook is intended to be organic and continually updated to reflect the best in this diverse and fast-moving field.

METHODOLOGY, CASE STUDY SELECTION, AND DATA SOURCES

The QASPP tools and documents are based on data drawn from the real-life daily experiences of practitioners in the field.

- **Range & Diversity**—The Case Study participants were recruited to include a representative sample of afterschool programs operating throughout California. An effort was made to represent programs across the Northern, Central, and Southern areas, as well as rural, suburban, and urban regions and from the main metropolitan areas (e.g., San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego). QASPP considered programs serving students in all schooling levels (elementary, middle, and high school).
- **Nominations & Recommendations**—QASPP also contacted the California Department of Education’s Regional Leads to identify any promising partnerships in their respective regions. A self-nomination form was distributed initially to all LCAP members [see Appendix D]. In some instances, forms were forwarded specifically to programs known to have a strong partnership (e.g., recognized by the researchers; recommended by a Regional Lead).
- **Interview Formats**—Once nominations were received, an interview was scheduled with the partnership representatives indicated on the form. A one to two hour phone call or in-person interview was conducted with at least one partnership representative. In some cases, several representatives from the CBO and the school district participated in the interview; in others, only two people (one representative from each partner) was

² Some examples of these early general guidebooks include, *Safe and Smart*, NCREL, and After School Alliance [see Literature Review and full references in Appendix C].

present and in a few cases the interviews were conducted with only one partner at a time. The interviews were digitally recorded and relevant portions transcribed.

- **Qualitative/Quantitative Materials**—QASPP collected the interview qualitative data along with more quantitative resources (e.g., documents and materials provided by the partnership agencies) to construct each of the case studies and other sections of this guidebook. [See interview questions for CBOs and LEAs in Appendix D].

The intent of these CBO-LEA partnership interviews was to document the evolution of each collaborative and to identify the distinct characteristics of each partnership. From these stories, we garnered concrete examples of their successful collaborative work to address specific issues and persistent challenges faced when providing quality programs to meet the needs of diverse communities. To provide structure for the body of qualitative data, we organized interview responses related to the following themes: 1) Finance; 2) Human Resources and Staff Development; 3) Curriculum and Content (Program Design); 4) Evaluation and Compliance; 5) Facilities and Infrastructure; 6) Communities and Families.

In total, fourteen (14) partnerships were interviewed representing a range of district sizes and partnership models and members, from diverse CBO partners (e.g., YMCA, B&GC, smaller local non-profits and faith-based organizations) and other public entities (e.g., city libraries, parks and recreation departments). In addition, interviewees were asked to provide researchers with samples of any program tools or descriptive documents that would be representative of the effective strategies they shared [see Appendix B, for List of Partnership Tools and Samples from the Field, available online at LCAP website]. Tools and sample documents collected include:

- Partnership Tools (collaborative models, principles and guidelines)
- Sample Memoranda of Understanding
- Assessment Tools and Sample Reports
- Program Management and Communications (plans, policies, forms, and informational materials)
- Staff Development (training program schedules)
- Curriculum and Program Materials

A Dialogue with the Field

In April 2009, the QASPP team facilitated a series of conversations regarding partnership successes and challenges. Panel discussions around key partnership topics were organized and presented at the Best of Out-of-School Time (BOOST) conference in Palm Springs, CA (April 23-25, 2009). The LCAP Quality Partnerships strand at the BOOST conference opened with an overview of the *Quality After School Partnerships Project*—presented by Steven Amick (LCAP Executive Director) and the project’s lead research consultants, Pilar O’Cadiz and Perry Chen—followed by five panels focused on specific types of partnership models and issues. The presentations and discussion that followed in each of the sessions was dynamic and informative. Notes taken by researchers during each panel presentation, and the documented dialogue that took place among the session participants, serve as an additional data source for

this guidebook. A brief overview of each panel and the partnerships represented are featured in the box below.

QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS STRAND—BOOST 2009

Thursday—April 23

Schools Partnering with Cities to Meet Student Needs

Panelists: Clint Taylor, National School District; Tamarie Tigh, National City Public Library; Debra Mason, Ambrose Parks and Recreation District; Joe Ross, City of Rialto Parks and Recreation Department

Long before there were state and federal funds to support afterschool programs, cities and school districts maintained joint-use agreements and other coordinated services to provide students safe and nurturing environments after the bell rings. The implementation of Proposition 49 has strengthened many of these long-standing partnerships, as well as given rise to a host of new efforts. This session will focus on collaborations between school districts and municipal agencies that have created positive synergies that exceed what either could have accomplished alone.

Friday—April 24, 2009

Partnering to Meet Family Needs Beyond After School

Panelists: Melanie Hare, Boys & Girls Club of Garden Grove; Normandie Nigh, A World Fit for Kids; Phyllis Reed, Anaheim City School District; Beth Clendenen, Anaheim YMCA

Most partnership efforts begin when the school day ends, but there are many local education agencies that have fostered joint efforts with community-based organizations to provide comprehensive family services, in addition to offering afterschool programs. This session focuses on school districts that have collaborated with local social service agencies to enhance their efforts in health education, family literacy, and other extra-curricular activities that support student achievement.

Managing Multiple Partnerships: An LEA Perspective

Panelists: Brad Lupien, CHAMPIONS with Los Angeles Unified School District; Diane Wilcock, Lucia Mar Unified School District; Jenifer Rhynes, San Luis Obispo County YMCA; Adolfo Herrera/Kathy Quiñones/Linda Nakagawa, Montebello Unified School District

Many school districts partner with a single community-based organization to develop and deliver afterschool services, but larger school districts often need to enlist the support of multiple agencies to meet their afterschool needs. This entails creating a wide variety of partnership models, based on the focus and capacity of the individual organizations. Learn how districts working with diverse groups have maintained consistency, while promoting the unique qualities their partners bring to the table.

Managing Multiple Partnerships: A CBO Perspective

Panelists: CynDee Zandes, THINK Together; Cathie Mostovoy, Woodcraft Rangers; Fernando Rodriguez, International Center for Education and Sports

Most community-based organizations partner with a single school district to deliver afterschool programs, but several larger community-based organizations maintain contracts with multiple school districts in order to cover their expansive service area. These districts may have differing agendas, fiscal policies and may employ varying levels of oversight. Learn how community agencies have adhered to their mission, while respecting the dictates of diverse school cultures.

Saturday—April 25

Maximizing Community Resources in Rural Areas

Panelists: Laura Hickie, Sierra Sands Unified School District; Sandra Goldstein, Southern Sierra Boys & Girls Clubs; Jodie Van Ornum, Shasta County Office of Education; Beth Chaton, Humboldt County Office of Education; Cliff Munson, Siskiyou County Office of Education

Some of the more sparsely populated areas of California don't have the luxury of choosing from among a wealth of community agencies to develop partnerships. In rural environments, partners may come in a wide variety of forms from traditional youth service agencies, to local service clubs, to individual volunteers. Hear how rural practitioners have strengthened their programs by cultivating community support.

II. Types of Partnerships and Case Study Findings

TYPES OF CBO-LEA PARTNERSHIPS

As discussed above, the California afterschool field has incorporated community-based organizations (CBOs) in programs and services from the beginning. Consequently, there are myriad configurations of CBOs working in partnerships with schools, districts, cities, public agencies, and universities. These relationships vary by size, region, demographics, scope of work, grantee status, and CBO role. One CBO might be a visual arts provider for 40 schools across the city, while another might be the management leader for four focused school sites. Yet another might be a direct grantee of the state, managing the funds and programs for a set of charter schools.

One of the challenges with this broad spectrum of CBOs and CBO partnerships is adapting technical assistance to the specific set-up. At times, the support is too generalized and offers high-level tips rather than practical advice; at other times, the support is too specific, tailored only for the situation of a few CBOs that have the same type of role in the same type of setting.

In an effort to bring design and organization around the field's technical assistance (TA), QASPP begins with a "typology" of CBO Partnership Models, i.e., a manageable set of common and recurring types of CBO-LEA structures.

Below in Table 2—Typology of CBO/LEA Partnership Models—you will find QASPP's initial set of types of afterschool partnerships: a starting point to conceptualize the distinct features of different partnerships and to organize TA efforts accordingly, bringing some helpful segmentation without going to the extreme of naming hundreds of types.

Readers of this guidebook can review the characteristics of different kinds of partnership configurations and determine the "type" their CBO/LEA relationship resembles the most. Moving forward, readers can use that type to narrow and find the resources that apply most directly to a particular situation.

Table 2. Typology of CBO/LEA Partnership Models

CBO TYPE	DESCRIPTION OF CBO/LEA PARTNERSHIP TYPE MODEL
I	<p align="center">CBO AS <u>GRANTEE</u> PARTNERING WITH DISTRICT(S)</p> <p>CBO is grantee or the fiscal agent of grant(s), partnering with one or more school districts (as required) to provide program at a school site or other location.</p>
II	<p align="center">CBO CONTRACTED PROGRAM PROVIDER AND “<u>MANAGEMENT LEAD</u>”; DISTRICT SERVES AS FISCAL AGENT</p> <p>CBO contracted by district to manage one or more sites; school district serves only as fiscal agent with minimal oversight of program may or may not have a full or part-time assigned district administrator to act as liaison with CBO Management Lead.</p> <p><i>NOTE: When the CBO is the grantee for 21stCCLC funding, while the LEA is the grantee for ASES funds partnerships can fit in both “Type I & II”.</i></p>
III	<p align="center">CBO AS “SCHOOL-SITE MANAGEMENT” WITH COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT BY DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR/UNIT</p> <p>CBO contracted by district to manage one or more sites; school district serves as fiscal agent and may oversee “general operations” of program at one or more sites. District Administrator (program director) and other district staff may manage programs; may sometimes work as site coordinators and/or regional supervisors. CBO may also employ its own site coordinators or fiscally sponsor the district’s employees.</p>
IV	<p align="center">CBO AS CONTRACTED SERVICE PROVIDER OF SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENT(S) (e.g. Tutoring; Sports; Enrichment)</p> <p>CBO contracted by school district or by CBO management (see above roles) to provide specific component(s) of the program; involvement may range from very minimal to provision of a variety of programmatic services. Overall management of program may be handled by district or lead CBO. These service provider CBOs may be at one, or many sites, within a given district or lead CBO managed program.</p>
V	<p align="center">NON-SCHOOL DISTRICT LEA (e.g. City; County Office of Education; Institution of Higher Education)</p> <p>Not a typical LEA type, given the need to partner with one or more school districts for its pool of student to attend the afterschool program. The program may, or may not, occur at a school site.</p>
VI	<p align="center">SCHOOL DISTRICT LEA GRANTEE: FISCAL AGENT & PROGRAM MANAGEMENT (Sole Provider)</p> <p>LEA is fully responsible for program management and implementation and does not subcontract any component to other community partners.</p>

KEY FINDINGS FROM CASE STUDIES OF EFFECTIVE AFTERSCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Features of Successful Partnerships

In this section, we explore several recurring themes that emerged from the Case Studies—pointing to the diverse factors involved in creating the conditions for successful afterschool partnerships. According to QASPP interview respondents, these factors have been critical to growing and sustaining the collaborative relationships that support quality programming.

While these themes are a starting point for this inquiry, they are by no means exhaustive. Further research and in-depth case studies of other successful partnerships and ongoing knowledge exchange among practitioners in the field will shed more light on what matters most to ensure ongoing success for LEA collaborators and the afterschool community.

Most Appropriate Option from Range of Management Structures

The Case Studies revealed a diverse range of management structures among afterschool program (ASP) partnerships. One primary distinction is whether the LEA (school district) manages its programs through a district central office or whether key management functions are centralized in a third-party CBO. Looking at the typology chart above, one can see this distinction across the spectrum – e.g., Types I & II place more management functions at the CBO, while Types III, IV, and VI may place those functions at the district (LEA). For clarity, we can differentiate these as “CBO-MANAGED” or “LEA-MANAGED.”

Even within these two main categories, there are significant variations. Consider how LEA-MANAGED structures might differ between cities and regions of varying sizes and demographics. A school district might employ a district administrator to oversee ASES and/or 21st CCLC programs at all funded sites in the district, while also managing one or more community partnerships. This staffing may be the head of curriculum and instruction, an extended learning office (in smaller districts), or a specially designated administrator (in larger districts). Contrast this to a large urban district such as the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), where a whole “Beyond the Bell Branch” (<http://btb.lausd.net/home/>) exists to carry out the complex set of daily activities and long range planning and ongoing coordination of multiple partners across 350 plus sites. In smaller districts such as National City, in San Diego County, a shared responsibility exists between the District and main partner, the City Library. Both partners work closely and are in daily contact to manage the program, with the district subcontracting additional providers of program components while the Library oversees and coordinates the sub-contractors service provision at the school sites.

CBO-MANAGED structures can vary as well. For example, Bay Area After-School All-Stars—formerly the San Jose After-School All-Stars—has functioned as the intermediary for other contracted CBO partners (e.g., service providers, class instructors). In contrast, Sierra Sands Unified School District presents a case where the partnerships are “Locally Managed” at the school site level, with the principal taking a main leadership and management role.

Understanding that “one size does not fit all” is a *critical perspective* to adopt when forming and maintaining effective partnerships between private and public entities around afterschool. Every local context is different and hence, every partnership develops its own unique process of coming together and figuring out what works for that particular community. Yet despite this specificity, the field needs to continue sharing effective practices across communities so that partnerships can learn from each other and help to improve the quality of programs available to youth. By identifying which management structure works best for your conditions you can learn from the experiences of partnerships operating in similar landscapes and help others too.

Relationship of Trust between CBO and LEA

A fundamental quality of all the partnerships featured in this guidebook is the establishment of a relationship of *trust* between the LEA and CBO partners. All partners emphasized this social/affective aspect of their successful partnership emphatically. Trust among all collaborative members—as reiterated by Case Study participants—is a matter of: (a) taking the time to meet face-to-face, (b) involving diverse stakeholders representative of the breadth of interests and resources in the community, and (c) maintaining both formal structured meetings and informal lines of communication where parties feel free to reach out and say what they think or get what they need on an ad hoc basis.

The quality of the relationships among the people who make up the collaborative determines what can be achieved and how it is achieved.

As such, the essentially “human aspect” of any partnership becomes paramount: *the quality of the relationships among the people who make up the collaborative determines what can be achieved and how it is achieved*. It determines whether people are willing to go the extra mile, to think outside the box and actually be innovative as opposed to being obstructive, static or, even worse, detrimental to the partnership’s progress towards meeting its goals.

History of Collaboration That Breeds Trust and Cooperation

A shared history matters. We found that communities where strong partnerships existed often had a long history of collaboration among the entities involved in the ASES/21st CCLC collaborative *prior* to the onset of Proposition 49 or any of the public afterschool funding. Such is the case of the Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove and the Garden Grove Unified School, or the Anaheim City School District’s partnership with Anaheim Family YMCA. In such longstanding partnerships the levels of trust and cooperation between the two main partner entities allow for expansion of the collaborative to include a range of other public and private partners. These expanded partnerships not only enhance the provision of afterschool program services, but also allow the collaborative to address a broader range of community needs.

Jointly-Defined and Flexible Partnerships for Programming and Funding

Another feature of successful partnerships is the ability to define the afterschool program goals jointly and to adjust their respective roles to fit one another as needed. Partnerships that engaged in rigorous community needs assessments, and in authentic discussions about their desired outcomes for youth, were able to design a more intentional program. They were able

to identify specific ways that all the partners could contribute to delivering quality enrichment experiences and appropriate and effective academic supportive activities for their students. Further, these programs demonstrated more openness and vision to address a broader range of student needs—from physical fitness and service learning to homework assistance and cultural activities. Like a jigsaw puzzle, the partners could identify a wide range of actual needs and then fit together to meet them.

For example, an ongoing challenge for many CBOs is how to integrate and implement academic support in afterschool programs—particularly in alignment with the school day curriculum. How do CBOs and LEAs navigate this challenging area together? Through a flexible and collaborative approach, several CBOs in our Case Studies were able to get the specific support they needed from school district experts, enabling them to better meet the districts’ academic goals through joint trainings, curriculum design support, and ongoing coaching from district-assigned academic specialists (e.g., credentialed teachers on special assignment, resource teachers, district curriculum and instruction personnel).

Another example is an open-minded approach *between* CBOs. Often, we hear about battles between CBOs that want to hold on to their area of expertise or services. Money, territorialism, control, reputation—all of these factors can complicate the gathering of CBOs in a joint venture. Yet in our sample pool of successful partnerships, many CBOs talked about being open to allowing other partner agencies to come in and support the quality improvement efforts of the larger partnership. Diverse CBOs may collaborate on the design of curriculum, organization and delivering of staff development, or provide specialized training in areas where others lack expertise. Often one CBO will directly provide an entire program component at a site managed by another CBO. In these exemplary partnerships, the commonly held priority remained the delivery of a high quality afterschool program, rather than the maintenance of territory and control of the available public dollars.

Finally, in these examples of successful partnerships, the CBOs had to be extremely clear and “upfront” about the complementary nature of collaborative funding. Money and its applied purposes can be the most complicated feature of partnerships. In addition to presenting how their programs and services fit with each other to meet a range of needs, each CBO had to exhibit a clear understanding of their responsibility for bringing additional resources to the table to leverage the public seed dollars in the achievement of the partnership’s goals.

Promising Partnership Practices

In this section, we summarize some of the promising partnership practices culled from the Case Studies. They are offered here to highlight what works and to outline the key elements of a knowledge base for the field with regard to successful afterschool collaboration. Naturally, some of these practices will echo the features of successful partnerships described above.

Clearly Defined Relationships

The Case Studies point to the need to involve stakeholders early on in the collaborative process through initial and ongoing meetings. Roles and shared responsibilities of each collaborative partner need to be delineated clearly from the start. When appropriate, they can be formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at either the site-level or the district-agency level. Checklists of responsibilities and partnership strategic plans can also help to keep everyone on the same path and to serve as documented “agreed actions.” Together, MOUs and Checklists can hold those charged with carrying out activities *accountable* to the afterschool partnerships shared goals and vision. Naturally, these documents are organic and can be revisited, assessed, and reformulated as needed through ongoing meetings and discussions.

Human Aspect: Face-to-Face Interactions, Bonding, and Appreciation

As discussed above, the *human aspect* of partnerships may be the most determinative factor for success. People need to trust one another in order for the partnership to excel. In the Case Studies, respondents described a number of vehicles to build invaluable trust and goodwill, e.g., planning sessions, special events, goal-setting meetings, and needs-assessment efforts. Collaborative retreats encourage understanding and cooperation between afterschool program staff and school/district staff (teachers, principals, key district administrators). Public demonstrations of appreciation for the efforts of all who contribute should occur regularly. Successful partnerships ritualize their recognition of the contributions of key partners using planned events such as Principal Appreciation Breakfasts, Collaborative Lunches, and School Board presentations and ASP culmination events.

Further, respondents described the “who and how” of these vehicles. Meetings and events should be held face-to-face and should involve a variety of potential stakeholders. Youth and parents should also be invited and involved whenever possible. The collaboration should invite community entities such as the police, hospitals and other health organizations, higher education institutions, and community service agencies (e.g., those serving populations other than children and youth), too. Inviting and including people early and often helps to leverage all the available resources for the support and advancement of youth and their families.

District as Key Partner in Professional Development and Capacity-Building

The districts represented in the Case Studies took seriously their responsibility to support the professional development of staff working for the agencies contracted to provide afterschool program services. Depending on their size, districts often designate one or more personnel (such as Teachers on Special Assignment, also known as TOSAs) to support curriculum design and professional development in collaboration with the CBOs.

This is the case in the Montebello and Garden Grove districts, where credentialed teachers work directly with CBO program staff through district-led trainings, curriculum development support, and ongoing coaching in the areas of instructional and behavior management practices. These districts work in close collaboration with their partner CBOs to help them meet

the academic needs of students through a variety of means, while maintaining reasonable expectations of what the afterschool program can achieve. For example, districts can:

- Share curriculum and student information
- Invite ASP staff to participate on student-study teams and IEP meetings
- Provide training to ASP staff for specialized topics ranging from district safety procedures and policies to strategies for working with English Language Learners
- Invite ASP staff to join professional development opportunities offered to teachers
- Train the ASP staff in standards, lesson planning and behavior management (done by teachers and district specialists)

For their part, the CBOs allocate time and resources for their staff to:

- Observe classroom teachers to become familiar with the school culture and instructional approaches;
- Communicate regularly with school site administration regarding ways to meet school goals and students' needs
- Seek input from school leadership on recruitment of ASP staff (e.g. hiring of classroom aides working at site during the school day; selecting credentialed teachers to work as site liaison; allowing principal to interview candidates for ASP staff positions)
- Open ASP staff trainings to school teachers (e.g. youth development and physical fitness activities)

Successful CBOs also use earmarked grant funding to hire Academic Teacher Liaisons (i.e., certified school staff member) that advocate for the afterschool program and provide ongoing mentorship and guidance to program staff.

CBOs Integrate with the School Site Vision and Activities

The community organizations in the Case Studies all exhibited a common understanding that the partnership *works both ways*. They incorporate intentional strategies to ensure that they not only provide afterschool program services, but also make significant efforts to become part of the school community and to support the general goals of the district for its students. These strategies range from getting involved with school duties to bringing new resources to the site to improving family relations with the school itself.

Examples of how CBOs allocate their resources for greater integration with the school include:

- Assigning their Site Supervisors (CBO staff members) to be at the school site all-day and encourage their involvement in school activities
- Allocate CBO staff time and resources to help the school with lunch hour and recess supervision, in order to improve connections with the youth and to build relationships with the school staff and administration

- Allocate CBO staff time and resources to weekend district and community events (some CBO have their ASP staff work on joint projects with schools such as helping with holiday programs, music and art projects, yearbook, parent programs etc.)
- Provide ASP staff with ongoing training and coaching on how to build the connection between school and afterschool

A few organizations have taken their afterschool partnership to the next level, providing a range of *additional services and resources* for the school (e.g. child and family counseling, health clinics and workshops, organized sports, parental outreach). They also work to bring more financial and in-kind resources to the district by introducing new partners that expand the opportunities for ASP participants and may even come to support other district initiatives.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, many of the afterschool partnerships featured here have developed very effective ways of helping schools to connect with parents and their communities. Principals and school district personnel expressed appreciation for the unique ways that their partner CBOs have created a space for parents and other community members to become part of the school culture and activities, involving the broader community in ASP culmination events, fundraisers and other cultural and service activities such as plays, festivals and art shows, neighborhood clean-ups, and volunteer and service learning opportunities.

Ongoing Oversight of Program Quality & Equity

Another common strategy across the partnership Case Studies was their commitment to ongoing oversight of programs to ensure equity of quality across different sites and providers. In many cases, the District or a Lead Agency (CBO) regularly carries out some form of Quality Assurance Assessment to monitor program quality. Some partnerships form an “oversight committee” to reflect jointly on collected data and develop action plans that respond to identified areas of need (e.g., Anaheim Achieves, Woodcraft Rangers and Garvey School District). To inform this collective reflection and program improvement process, the leadership team may engage outside evaluators to conduct needs assessments and program and youth outcome studies. Program evaluation results are communicated back to sites in a clear feedback loop to inform local program improvement efforts.

COMMON CHALLENGE AREAS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The QASPP Case Studies reveal some common areas of difficulty for both CBOs and LEAs along some key issue areas: 1) Evaluation and Compliance; 2) Finance; 3) Facilities and Infrastructure; 4) Human Resources and Staff Development; 5) Curriculum and Content; 6) Communities and Families. At the same time, the Case Studies indicate instances where “out-of-the box” thinking, flexibility and creativity lead to possible solutions. Although these examples of partnership problem solving occur in the particular contexts of the QASPP Case Studies, their common sense and innovative approaches may be replicable elsewhere, or at least inspire other partnerships to imagine their own possibilities.

The six main problem areas briefly described in this section include examples of specific *solutions* devised by Case Study partnerships to address common issues and challenges they face. In the following section, an online prototype for the field to use for charting problems and sharing knowledge about workable solutions across partnerships is presented.

1. Evaluation and Compliance Issues

A challenge for many afterschool partnerships is to align cooperation and understanding of all partners when it comes to ensuring that all State and Federal grant requirements are being met. This is necessary in order to guarantee a successful experience with Categorical Program Monitoring (CPM, the state auditing process for compliance with legislative mandates).

For example, in one case, the CPM audit revealed inconsistent attendance record keeping practices among subcontracted CBOs, which resulted in inaccurate attendance records. As a solution, the lead CBO—contracted by the LEA to manage the program and oversee a number of subcontracted providers (an example of a Type II partnership; see table 2)—developed an attendance guidelines and manual to ensure uniform record keeping across sites. The accuracy of attendance records across providers was further verified through the conducting of internal monthly audits.

2. Finance Issues

One important Prop 49 reform aimed to change the grant funding mechanism from a reimbursement model (that is, grantees previously reported their program attendance and then received reimbursement on a per student daily rate) to a direct grant (grantees now receive 65% of the funds up front, with a second installment of 25% and a final 10% payment upon submission of a year-end financial report). The change to a “direct grant” presumably would address some of the cash flow issues faced by many ASES program grantees. However, even though LEAs receive a larger initial disbursement of grant funds, partner CBOs often do not benefit from the reform. CBOs commonly report not receiving sufficient funds to start up program operations, forcing CBOs to carry costs even though program grant funds have arrived at the school district or LEA. In some successful case study partnerships, the LEA disperses funds immediately upon receipt from the state (or even in advance) to its partner CBO.

Since they are contracted for program delivery services, CBOs often are not paid by the partner LEA for the “prep time” required for program start-up. CBOs then find themselves short of funds to cover the cost of planning and training required to get ready to operate a quality program as soon as school starts in the fall. In one case, an LEA made it possible for the contract of their partner CBO to begin two weeks before school started, allowing the CBO staff to work and receive training to prepare adequately for successful program start-up. This LEA allows for the local site-level administration of grant funds, with a coalition comprised of principals and a team of CBO and school representatives working out the afterschool program budget according to the specific site’s program operation needs.

Recognizing that CBOs need to cover program administrative and start-up costs, some LEAs choose to retain a maximum of 5% or less for their indirect costs related to the grant.

This is related to another fiscal issue shared by many CBOs: the percentage of *indirect costs* retained by the LEA varies widely from district to district, making it easier for some CBOs to manage the costs of operating programs, in contrast to others who receive no allocation for administrative costs. Recognizing that CBOs need to cover program administrative and start-up costs, some LEAs choose to retain a maximum of 5% or less for their indirect costs related to the grant. In a few cases, districts retain no grant funds for their indirect costs.

3. Facilities and Infrastructure Issues

Issues CBOs most commonly cite when operating afterschool programs on school campuses arise around the sharing of facilities and other related infrastructural matters. Many teachers are unaccustomed to sharing their classrooms with outsiders. To change teachers' attitudes about the use of their classroom space by the afterschool program requires a "cultural shift" and willingness to view the space as open to the school community in service of the greater good, which is the well-being and advancement of each student. A concerted effort on the part of afterschool staff is required to gain teachers' acceptance and trust. Such efforts should include the development of shared expectations and ongoing communication about the use of the facilities and about how the program benefits their own teaching goals for students.

CBOs argue that they find greatest success operating the afterschool program at sites with a room dedicated to the program. Where no dedicated room exists for the program, or at least base its operations, agencies feel like they are shuffled from one place to another and have no place where they can meet with staff or adequately store supplies. Again, Case Study participants point to regular communication with school administration, and the establishment of clear roles, delineated responsibilities, and explicit efforts to support school goals as key strategies for gaining access to space and other material and professional support resources.

Several CBOs indicate that they send staff to school events to help with managing students or to provide child care at parent meetings; they assign staff to help with lunch hour and recess supervision during the school day; and send staff to spend time in classrooms to learn the schools' academic and behavior management approach and gain teachers' trust. In some cases, the LEA and/or CBO will allocate afterschool program funds to cover the cost of the custodian hours or basic supplies like toilet paper. As CBO personnel become more versed in the school culture and vested in maintaining its physical environment, they are increasingly perceived as part of the school community.

4. Human Resource and Staff Development Issues

Staff recruitment, hiring, training and supervision can become complex within the context of the afterschool program partnership given the exchange of responsibilities across the institutional boundaries of the LEA and partner CBO(s). For example, lack of clarity can occur regarding who has say in hiring the site director or teacher liaison, for example; to whom does that staff person answer—the school principal or agency’s program manger?

By sharing knowledge and skills, and creating formal and informal ways of information exchange and collaboration, teachers and afterschool staff become part of a team working in support of the same students.

CBOs can successfully mitigate such personnel issues by involving the school principal in the selection of site staff, establishing a system for communicating to the school principal concerns and issues as they arise, participating in teacher meetings, observing classrooms, and giving presentations on the afterschool program to teachers, administrators and the school board. In one case study, the partnership went as far as organizing retreats with the participation of agency staff and teachers, as well as school and district administrators, to build a collaborative culture and better coordinate efforts to align the afterschool program with the school goals. Joint trainings where afterschool program staff and teachers learn about youth development principles, or safety procedures, are examples of such collaborative efforts to build a team approach. In some cases teachers or school district specialists train afterschool program staff in specific topics such as math strategies, literacy or behavior management approaches consistent with those used within the school day.

Conversely, afterschool program staff may train teachers in physical fitness activities carried out in the afterschool program in order to incorporate a consistent physical education approach across the entire day. By sharing knowledge and skills and creating formal and informal ways of information exchange and collaboration, teachers and afterschool staff become part of a team working in support of the same students. This dynamic works both ways.

5. Curriculum and Content Issues

The provision of afterschool enrichment activities that support academic development while engaging students in fun interactive experiences based on principles of youth development has been an ongoing challenge of the field. The tension between academics and enrichment has led to some conflicts between CBOs and the LEAs that contract them to deliver program services, or with the parents and communities they serve who expect a tutorial program and are dismayed when their child comes home from the afterschool program with homework incomplete. In such contexts, CBOs report that it can sometimes be a challenge for them to get their partner districts, or even parents, to accept alternative or non-traditional types of activities taking place at school sites, such as a skate park or hip hop dance club.

Those who have been able to overcome this common challenge—striking an appropriate balance between supporting the academic needs of students and offering highly engaging enrichment activities that achieve a range of developmental outcomes for youth—successfully outreach to all stakeholders, communicating the benefits of participation in the afterschool program. By involving all stakeholders throughout the program planning process—from the needs assessment and identification of program goals to the development of the program curriculum—CBO/LEA partnerships are able to construct a shared vision and achieve commonly held objectives for the youth they serve. Most important is having a mutual understanding about what the goals of the program are and intentionality about how the partnership plans to go about reaching them.

6. Communities and Families Issues

Also important is the role of the Community Based Organization in making the afterschool program responsive to the population it serves. Its grassroots connection to the community and ability to work outside the school walls make its contribution to the afterschool partnership unique and powerful. CBOs have the opportunity to serve as liaisons between the school and families and other community stakeholders. Issues can arise when a CBO enters into a contract with an LEA to serve a community distinct from the one it has historically served; or when the agency staffs' own cultural background does not match that of students in the afterschool program. CBOs need to understand the culture of the community and reach out to parents to educate them on the ways their child can benefit developmentally and academically from participation in a range of enrichment activities during the afterschool hours. CBOs can make the school campus welcoming to parents, bringing in new community partners to support school goals.

As an example of a culturally responsive operation of the afterschool program, one case study CBO described how it found itself needing to learn how to communicate and address the expectations of a cultural community different from what it was accustomed to working with in the past. The CBO created a campaign to promote the benefits of the program in terms that were accessible to the community. In other cases, CBOs have broadened their services to the community beyond the provision of exclusive afterschool program services to include services in family health and nutrition, family literacy, counseling and other

CBOs need to understand the culture of the community and reach out to parents to educate them on the ways their child can benefit developmentally and academically from participation in a range of enrichment activities during the afterschool hours.

activities that support the general safety and well being of the community. Victories have also occurred when hiring choices ensure that site staff are representative of the community served. When some of the afterschool program staff share the cultural background of students and their parents, insight may be added to the program that otherwise may have not have been attained, ultimately enhancing the program's ability to engage youth and their families and to be more responsive to their interests and needs.

III. Case studies of effective Partnership Models

The case studies of the *Quality Afterschool Partnerships Project* represent the voices of leaders and practitioners across the state—district administrators, directors of CBOs, program coordinators, and other intermediaries—who work tirelessly to ensure that California’s children and youth receive the best afterschool programs possible. In the face of financial challenges, bureaucratic stonewalling and organizational stumbling, and the fast paced expansion of California’s publicly funded afterschool programs, these partnerships have flourished, providing a knowledge base of practice from which the afterschool field can learn and evolve.

Each of the 15 *QASPP* case studies (featured both in this guidebook and online) are based on interviews with one or more representative of an afterschool partnership involving at least one LEA receiving the California’s After School Education Safety (ASES) program funding. The lessons offered in each case study often reflect similar approaches based on common sense and a genuine spirit of collaboration around shared goals related to expanding educational and enrichment opportunities for students. In some cases, however, the strategies and practices shared are surprisingly original and inventive in an effort to make a particular vision or service possible despite the challenges of collaborating across the distinct institutional and organizational cultures of the range of LEAs and CBOs represented. Each partnership case study is a story unto itself—narrating a community’s journey on the path of daring to pursue the possibilities of afterschool. The cases are organized around themes that emerged from the interview data and aim to highlight practices and lessons most relevant to realizing effective afterschool partnerships.

Nine of the 15 case studies are featured in this guidebook, while an additional 6 are available online at the League of California Afterschool Providers website (www.afterschoolleague.org). Also available on the LCAP website are a number of resources—listed in Appendix B, *Partnership Tools and Samples from the Field*—shared by case study participants for others to download and adapt. The 9 case studies in this section are organized into three broad categories and presented alphabetically within each category:

CBO/LEA PARTNERSHIPS SERVING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

- Anaheim Achieves, Anaheim Family YMCA & Anaheim City School District
- Bay Area After-School All Stars & Multiple LEA Partners
- Boys & Girls Club of Garden Grove & Garden Grove Unified School District
- International Center of Education and Sports (ICES) & Montebello Unified School District
- Nvision—Woodcraft Rangers & Garvey School District

RURAL PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

- Bright Futures After School Program, Multiple Partners & Lucia Mar School District
- Southern Sierra Boys & Girls Club & Sierra Sands Unified School District

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Mt. Diablo CARES & Mt. Diablo Unified School District with Bay Area Community Resources
- WINGS—National City Public Library & National School District

CBO/LEA PARTNERSHIPS SERVING DIVERSE SUBURBAN AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

ANAHEIM ACHIEVES—ANAHEIM FAMILY YMCA & ANAHEIM CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Region 9 (Orange County)—Large Urban Program

Since its inception in 1999, the *Anaheim Achieves* program, a partnership principally between the Anaheim City School District and Anaheim Family YMCA, has established itself as a model of collaboration in the service of a diverse and dynamic urban community. Over the years the collaboration has grown to include many other partners, including the City of Anaheim and four additional school districts: Centralia School District, Magnolia School District, Savanna School District, Anaheim Union High School District. Additional *Anaheim Achieves* partners include the local community college, Cypress College, and local health institution, Children’s Hospital of Orange County, and other community partners. This case study focuses on the evolution and key characteristics of the partnership between the Anaheim City School District and the Anaheim YMCA.

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

Collaborative Circle [Graphic]

Organizational Chart

Needs Assessment Summary

Program Action Plan

Program Fact Sheet

Staff Training & Events Schedule

ANAHEIM ACHIEVES AWARDS & NATIONAL RECOGNITIONS

2001

Top collaboration in California by the Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership

2003

*Regional Learning Center through the California After School Partnership
Award for Educational Excellence from the Association of California School Administrators*

Golden Bell Award from the California School Boards Association

2005

National nomination as a promising after-school program in mathematics by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in

2007

Certificate of Congressional Special Recognition

Currently, the *Anaheim Achieves* program receives both After School Education and Safety (ASES) and Federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program funding (with the District serving as the LEA for the state funds and the YMCA for the Federal grant) to serve 4,800 students at 40 elementary sites, 6 junior high schools and 2 high schools.

A hallmark of the *Anaheim Achieves* program is its intentional collaborative approach, represented in the ***Collaborative Cycle*** comprised of seven interrelated strategies:

1. Invest in relationships
2. Obscure organizational boundaries
3. Remain focused on mission
4. Utilize multi-faceted communication
5. Empower all to be decision-makers
6. Model continuous improvement
7. Share successes and challenges.

These strategies have served to guide and strengthen the partnership through its first decade. The Anaheim Family YMCA Vice President of Programs points out that these strategies are “no secret” and are applicable to “any program or site.” A graphic of the cycle “helps as a reminder to the partnership that they must continually engage” in the key processes it identifies. [See *Collaborative Cycle* graphic in Appendix B].

The Role of Dialogue and Shared Responsibilities in Authentic Partnership Building

The District and CBO leadership of *Anaheim Achieves* insist that one of the keys to its success has been an ongoing pursuit of authentic dialogue among all partners and the seeking out of input from all stakeholders (at all levels of their respective organizations), with shared responsibilities for all. The *Anaheim Achieves* leadership works intentionally to involve district, school and community stakeholders whenever possible in the collaborative process: establishing program goals, crafting of the program design, managing different program components and assessing program outcomes. An explicit involvement of all partners allows for informed collaborative decision-making to take place. As a result of such a joint effort, the *Anaheim Achieves* collaborative has identified nine shared program goals:

1. Safe off-track and afterschool environment
2. Students will meet or exceed state and local standards.
3. Develop positive character traits
4. Enrichment and community service activities
5. Parent/Family involvement and education
6. Healthy lifestyle choices through fitness and nutrition
7. Volunteer recruitment for service learning clubs, student mentoring, and community events
8. Staff and volunteer development/training
9. Collaborative support and strategic partnerships

Part of sustaining a participatory collaborative approach is through ongoing structured communication with principals and district administrators. A distinct way that this happens in *Anaheim Achieves* is that school personnel are not excluded in the afterschool program planning and decision making process. On the contrary, teachers and principals at each afterschool program site get involved in the process from the start. Together, the YMCA staff and school personnel work to find solutions to common logistical challenges from sharing space on school campuses to more complex programmatic and personnel matters. The YMCA Vice President of Programs explains how from the onset they have sought to make connections between the afterschool program and the school day from diverse approaches and levels:

We took the lead [on the grant] but we recognized our weakness to be academics. Within the first year we hired [a former assistant superintendent] as what we called our Educational Coordinator to focus primarily on academics. And that is what we've been doing ever since. She would come with me [when talking to school teachers and administrators] and translate it into education-ease for them. If I was talking, for instance, about the day to day operations [of the afterschool program] she would fill in blanks and say, "What she is trying to say is that we will meet the District and State standards, and we will be doing needs assessments..." All the stuff that I was unaware of that the District goes through, she was able to fill in that portion of the conversation for me.

Through structured ongoing communication with principals and district leadership *Anaheim Achieves* has been able to advance its program goals. During its initial years of the operation, the District and YMCA coordinated monthly Principal Breakfasts with the participation of the Superintendent and five YMCA representatives to inform the school administrators of the afterschool activities and to discuss any issues that had arisen at sites or on a larger programmatic level. But now that the program is more established and many of the initial issues have been worked out, Principal Breakfasts are held only quarterly. The Superintendent, with the objective of maximizing the principals' time at school sites, has determined that five principals be selected each year to meet regularly with the YMCA along with the District program managers. These principals then report on the afterschool program back to their colleagues during regularly scheduled principal meetings.

The willingness for school administrators and YMCA leadership to commit to intensive meetings in the earlier stages of the program development and to maintain those lines of communication has allowed them to establish a relationship of trust and mutual responsibility and to maintain the quality of programs provided. The strong relationship between the District and program leadership has been central to maintaining the health of the partnership over the long term. As an example of the strength of this relationship, the District program administrator tells how she was able to advocate for the afterschool program when the District cabinet turned over, with the new cabinet membership having no historical memory of the District's mutually beneficial partnership with the YMCA. She was able to promote the value of the *Anaheim Achieves* afterschool program, and clearly communicate its role in supporting the District's goals.

Currently, a YMCA Program Director oversees twelve sites and meets with principals on an individual basis, either monthly or bi-monthly. The Program Supervisor is responsible for the program at the site level. Program Supervisors may meet with their site's principal either weekly or monthly and on an as-needed basis. In addition, a Program Liaison (PL, a designated credentialed teacher at each site) works with the afterschool program staff and facilitates the programs' coordination with the school day. Program Liaisons across sites meet five times a year with the YMCA Educational Coordinator and the YMCA Program Director to coordinate ongoing staff development and mentoring and to ensure consistency of message and methods across sites. The school principal has a role in recommending which teacher might be

considered for the Program Liaison position and also participates in interviewing the Program Supervisor. This serves to foster principal buy-in, and build trust between the afterschool program staff and the school administration. [See *Anaheim Achieves Organizational Chart* in Appendix B].

Intentional Linkage with the School Day: the Role of the Educational Coordinator and Program Liaison

The organizational structure of the *Anaheim Achieves'* program management has continually evolved in an effort to intentionally link the afterschool program with the school day. For example, the role of the Program Liaison has evolved over the years, with expanded responsibilities beyond its initial title of "Literacy Coach." This position was previously limited to creating curriculum and providing staff development. As the Program Liaison (PL) has needed to adapt to the specific needs of each site, the role of the PL has necessarily become more involved. Now the Program Liaison's overarching role is to help mitigate a range of issues between the afterschool program and school in addition to coaching and training staff. The PL dedicates 2 ½ hours per week to supporting the program at its site. The PL provides training and mentorship for afterschool program staff on an ongoing basis by sharing pedagogic expertise and modeling teaching lessons. The PL also collaborates with the Program Supervisor to organize staff development activities during the year, which staff are required to attend. In addition, the PL may guide afterschool program staff in practicing behavior management strategies coherent with each school's approach in order to give youth a consistent message and set of expectations throughout their day (both during and afterschool).

One of the most instrumental things that has helped to coordinate the afterschool program with the school day, has been the Program Liaisons at each site who are regular daytime teachers

—District Administrator

The *Anaheim Achieves'* District and YMCA leadership point out how the appropriate structures and effective strategies to better connect with the school day were developed over time; it has been a process not without challenges. As the District administrator comments:

One of the most instrumental things that has helped to coordinate the afterschool program with the school day, has been the Program Liaisons at each site who are regular daytime teachers. When another teacher is upset that their room was left a mess or that something was stolen, [the PLs] are the ones who try to smooth it over with their people. And I am not going to kid you. There were growing pains for sure. Teachers are very territorial when you are in their classroom using their things. And they may even be in their classroom working afterschool while the kids are in there and they see supervision that isn't the way they would do it. We just definitely had growing pains.

Ultimately, the Program Liaisons have served as a stabilizing factor, particularly at sites where the same teacher has held the position for a number of years. When a teacher resigns, the

principal helps to identify a teacher to fill the vacant position. The principal has direct oversight of the PL at each school site, helping to create a sense of teamwork among the school administrators, teachers and afterschool program directors. “We have a triangle thing going on here, in that it takes everyone to be on the same page together to make this program work,” the YMCA Vice President of Programs adds.

The YMCA VP further explains how this arrangement (wherein the PL is contracted by the YMCA and receives a stipend for their commitment, but remains supervised by the principal) works well, particularly in situations when a PL/teacher is not meeting his or her responsibilities. When necessary the principal has been able to intervene on behalf of the YMCA. Such situations are rarer now that the PL position has evolved into a clear set of responsibilities, however. “Those don’t happen as much as they used to when we first established the program when everyone was trying to figure out what they had to do for the stipend,” says the YMCA VP. As teachers become more competent and efficient in carrying out their basic required responsibilities, they are able to dedicate their allocated time to supporting the program in other ways that they autonomously identify as meeting specific needs of their site. For example, says the YMCA VP, “They may take their 2 1/2 hours to be more hands on and even take the kids out to do specialized tutoring.”

One of the roles of the District based Educational Coordinator is to oversee the PLs’ activities within their respective sites and ensure that the activities are consistent across sites in aligning with the District goals for both the program and school day. The Educational Coordinator meets four times a year with all the PLs at both Anaheim City School District and the Magnolia School District sites. Furthermore, every year the PL and principal at each site (sometimes with the involvement of other teachers) conduct a needs assessment based on students’ standardized test scores to identify the specific academic needs that should be addressed in the afterschool program. The Educational Coordinator and her team then work with the PL to design a site-specific plan to address those needs. The YMCA Vice President of Programs further points out, “They then develop activities to train our staff [in matters] that are tied back to what’s been identified in the needs assessment. [Once a month] the program leaders receive trainings in the activities that are developed [by the team].” In addition, the PLs are given the opportunity to formally provide feedback (via the Educational Coordinator) to the YMCA and the District on how they perceive the program as doing and the ways in which it could be improved.

Not surprisingly, some of the issues identified by the *Anaheim Achieves* program leadership are related to the complex personnel and supervisory roles between District employees and YMCA staff. One of the challenges that the *Anaheim Achieves* program has faced was getting the Program Supervisors to understand that although they are employees of the YMCA, their role is to connect to the school, to communicate issues and concerns as well as the program’s successes directly to the site principal and general school community through regularly scheduled meetings as well as through email communication, phone and face to face contact, and through their own participation in teacher meetings and formal presentations to the school staff on an ongoing basis.

For many Site Supervisors it's their first professional job and so we really have to help them understand all these different things that are going to make 'you be successful.'

—District Administrator

The District Administrator makes an important point about the professional development needs of young afterschool program staff, stating, “For many Site Supervisors it’s their first professional job and so we really have to help them understand all these different things that are going to make ‘you be successful.’” As full time employees, Site Supervisors have the responsibility to maintain visibility and to invest in building that relationship with the school administration. The YMCA VP echoes this

perspective, recognizing the imperative that all program staff gain the principal’s respect and approval:

The principal does have to “sign off” on you. The principal does have to trust you. It’s not just the YMCA; it’s the principal too. That’s why it’s a really fine line we have to walk, being the one hiring, because in the end the school District has all the legal responsibility. In the end, if an afterschool staff member does something negative the parent will go after the YMCA and they will also go after the school District. And so whomever we select [for an afterschool program position] is a representative of both [the school District and the YMCA].

To address this issue, the Program Supervisor position evolved from a part time into a full time position, allowing time for coordinating with school site teachers and administrators to connect the afterschool program with the school day program. However, in some cases, the YMCA Vice President of Programs explains, principals have tried to dismiss a program supervisor at their site when issues arise instead of going through the appropriate procedures. Given the unique CBO/LEA partnership relationship, she emphasizes that school administrators need to communicate any issues they are having with afterschool program staff with both the District and the YMCA before taking any action, such as dismissal, and instead work collaboratively to address such personnel matters.

To build staff competencies, which boosts staff retention and program quality, all *Anaheim Achieves* afterschool program site staff receive four hours of YMCA-provided training each month in addition to the general large group YMCA staff trainings offered on a regular basis. In addition, the District provides further trainings on specific topics such as dealing with “tagging” on school campuses and other topics as the need arises. For example, the school nurses decided to train Program Supervisors on health needs of students and practical issues such as how to administer medication. “One of our nurses took the lead on it and said ‘we’re going to go train them, they need it’ and they did,” remarks the District administrator. [See *Sample Training Schedule*, in Appendix B]

As mentioned above, principals and school faculty meet to identify academic needs of students and determine site-specific ways that the afterschool program can intentionally support the schools' goals. Monthly staff trainings allow for these activities to be carried out by afterschool program staff who understand the purpose of what they are charged with implementing, and who have the competencies required to make it work. Also, such meetings afford staff an expedient opportunity to voice their thinking about what is working and what is not, and to communicate issues and concerns they have about the program as those issues arise.

Needs Assessment and Program Evaluation for Program Improvement

A hallmark of the *Anaheim Achieves* partnership is its engagement in regular assessments to identify the evolving needs of students and the school community, adjust its goals and programming, and track youth and other program outcomes. According to the District and YMCA program leaders, evaluation plays a central role in the success of *Anaheim Achieves* partnership.

Evaluation team meetings with Anaheim City School District and YMCA representatives and the contracted external evaluator are conducted to determine the kinds of outcome measures they want to use and to ensure that they match the collaborative's program goals, as well as identify the data that needs to be collected. "It is very intentional and we look at the data all the time," the YMCA VP insists. In this way, the program quality assessment data collected via survey and focus groups from all stakeholders inform the collaborative's ongoing program assessment and improvement efforts. As the YMCA Vice President of Programs attests:

Once the annual evaluation is conducted, the partnership representatives come together to develop an Action Plan that outlines specific objectives for program improvement.

Initially [the contracted external evaluator] would say 'this is what you should be looking at,' but then the team decided we want to look at more than this. We want to look at character development, 'Are we building character?' We want to look at safety and belonging to the neighborhood. [The contracted evaluator] then develops questions for a survey and she has us look at it as a team to see 'is what you really want to know?'

These efforts are leveraged across the partnership. For example, Anaheim City School District will add questions to a global survey being administered to students and parents in order to collect data for the cities' purposes in operating its community and youth programs, but that are also useful to the *Anaheim Achieves* program. The YMCA VP of Programs elaborates on how their evaluation effort goes beyond just collecting data to report on the program outcomes, but also is part of their ongoing effort to understand the community's evolving needs and to engage all stakeholders:

Last month we met and the evaluator shared that she wanted to do the surveys earlier in March, and got everyone on board. And also, Joe from the City is in the room and I ask Joe, "Make sure that if there is something that you need to know

from the city's perspective [let us know so that we can include it in our survey]...this is going out to several thousand families and kids, maybe there is a question you have about gangs or tagging or something...so it's not just about the afterschool; it can be about general well being or health...things that the other stake holders want to know. This is the time to ask [while keeping it to a one page survey]...For instance, we know over the years that parents love us, so when you get to your 90-96% [positive response on the question of parent satisfaction with the program], I think we need to change the question. What else do we want to know from parents?

Once the annual evaluation is conducted, the partnership representatives come together to develop an Action Plan that outlines specific objectives for program improvement. In more recent years, the partners recognized the need to focus more on site-specific program data in order to address the needs of students at each site, including parents and site staff in the process. [See sample *Needs Assessment Survey* and *Anaheim City School District Needs Assessment Summary* in Appendix B].

The evaluation data, in turn, serves as a tool for holding the Site Supervisors up to a high level of expectations, the District administrator points out. Site Supervisors' critical role in collecting complete data from the participants at their site is made clear to be part of those expectations. The final evaluation report is shared with the Site Supervisors to engage them in the process of reflecting on the program's identified shortcomings and strengths, and to ensure their involvement in the partnerships continuous program improvement efforts.

According to the *Anaheim Achieves* leadership, it is also important to keep in mind that some teachers and administrators who are new to the District may not be aware of what is going on in the afterschool program and how it benefits their students and the school community. In this regard, teacher surveys are monitored for responses that indicate their level of awareness of the activities and successes of the *Anaheim Achieves* program. The YMCA Vice President of Programs explains:

That's an ongoing concern; that we get complacent when you've been around so long and when you become so big you think, 'Everybody in Anaheim knows us, we don't have to go out and do presentations in the city!'

Consequently, consistent efforts must be made to connect with all school staff and communicate at all levels of the school District and the community regarding *Anaheim Achieves* activities, successes, and emerging challenges and needs.

Supportive Fiscal Policy

With regard to the financial aspect of the YMCA's relationship with the Anaheim City School District as it concerns the afterschool partnership, the District has consistently made sure that the YMCA receives 95% of the ASES grant funds. In the words of the District leadership, "We

cap the District's indirect at 5% even if the allowed indirect goes above that." This is not common, as the YMCA administrator explains:

It's very good they [cap at 5%] because I know that a lot of Districts give only the direct and then say 'Go run a program'. You don't get any admin costs.' And then [the CBOs] are like, 'Okay, how are we doing this?' I work with a lot of YMCAs that are going through that right now.

Both the District and YMCA leadership attribute this level of support to the longevity of the partnership and the conscientiousness of the individuals who are in the decision-making positions to take into account the resources required of it to operate a quality program.

Comprehensive Collaboration Beyond the Afterschool Program

The positive collaboration experience of the *Anaheim Achieves* afterschool program has led to an expansion of the partnership to provide other services at the school site level such as volunteer coordination and links to other club activities. For example, the YMCA also works with law enforcement and health agencies in support of their various community outreach programs. The YMCA director elaborates on their comprehensive partnership approach:

It's not just afterschool any more now. We have mentoring, we have volunteering, I mean if they need to have someone watch the kids if they are doing an event with the parents, [we help]. We've helped with lunch clubs at the school. It's very much that relationship. We are not here to fault teachers or parents. We're here just to help everyone. So the staff have that [understanding]. They live to help people so they really go above and beyond and want to do whatever they can. So if the school calls and says 'We need you to pick up some kids in your van,' we're gonna do that.

In this way the *Anaheim Achieves* partnership has served as a springboard for other collaborations to occur, strengthening the community and ultimately helping each partner meet its specific organizational goals and improving the quality of life for all in the Anaheim community.

BAY AREA AFTER-SCHOOL ALL-STARS & MULTIPLE LEA PARTNERS

Region 5 (Santa Clara County) — Small to Medium Suburban/Urban Program

The Bay Area After-School All-Stars (ASAS) provides comprehensive afterschool programming in partnership with four districts:

1. Alum Rock School District
2. Campbell Union School District
3. Mount Pleasant School District
4. San Jose Unified School District

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

Requirements for LEA MOU

*Principal Feedback Forms
(Initial and End Year)*

Attendance Reporting Policy

The Bay Area ASAS has played a leadership role in regional efforts to build the capacity of the afterschool field. The goal of The Bay Area After-School All-Stars (ASAS)—formerly known as the Greater San Jose After-School All-Stars—is to open access to quality afterschool programming to as many youth as possible in the Bay Area. To achieve this goal the organization operates around the following five core values:

- **Integrity**—We make decisions based on the greater good of the organization and our mission.
- **Professionalism**—We treat our coworkers, our students, their families, our district partners, and like-minded organizations with respect, assume the best in their intentions, and recognize their unique contributions.
- **Collaboration**—We communicate openly and honestly, and we thrive on cooperation and teamwork.
- **Leadership**—We take ownership for the success of our mission, holding our colleagues and ourselves accountable for outcomes.
- **Continuous Improvement**—We consistently reflect on our performance, and we are open to constructive feedback as individuals and as an organization.

www.bayallstars.org

To meet these goals, while addressing the challenges of working with the different institutional structures and cultures of each of its four partner districts, the Bay Area ASAS adopts a creative and flexible approach. Although they have a strong collaborative relationship with each of their LEA partners, the Bay Area ASAS leadership points out that the character of each partnership is a distinct and evolving one.

For example, serving as the Lead Program Manager for two of its partner LEAs, Alum Rock and San Jose, Bay Area ASAS has been responsible for selecting and overseeing several subcontracted afterschool program providers as well as directly operating the afterschool program at some school sites in these two districts. However, after conducting a thorough review of the agreements made with the Alum Rock and San Jose school districts, the Bay Area After-School All-Stars concluded that, at the end of the 2009-2010 school year, it would no longer serve as the managing agency for both partners. Bay Area ASAS identifies three primary reasons for this decision:

- The fees charged as a management fee, while fair, ultimately did not cover the costs associated with carrying out the responsibilities of a managing agency.
- Repeatedly, All-Stars found that in dealing with issues concerning other agencies, often times its own relationship with districts would be adversely affected. Additionally, the model placed a great deal of responsibility on the All-Stars, but did not grant any authority to enforce those responsibilities.
- All-Stars decided it wanted 100% of its resources to be directed to producing the highest quality after-school programs, and that being a managing agency was diverting the resources necessary to be a premier program provider.

Upon announcing its decision to no longer serve as a Lead Program Manager, both districts agreed it was a prudent move, according to Bay Area ASAS Executive Director. Given the fact that no other districts in the area operate with a managing agency, both districts have decided not to hire a new managing agency and instead opted to manage their afterschool program providers directly.

Some of the challenges of serving as a Lead Program Manager, shared by the Bay Area ASAS leadership as a result of their tenure working in such a role, are outlined below, in addition to various effective partnership strategies the agency has developed for providing quality afterschool program services at sites throughout the Bay Area.

The Responsibilities and Challenges of a Lead Program Manager & Direct Service Provider

In its role as a Program Manager, Bay Area ASAS provides weekly technical assistance to subcontracted provider agencies as well as monthly trainings and meetings for School Site Supervisors, and holds monthly Agency Director Meetings. In addition to these meetings and trainings coordinated by Bay ASAS, all of the collaborating providers meet monthly with the Santa Clara County After School Collaborative (SCCASC). LEAs are represented at the SCCASC convening by school district representatives who share information and coordinate efforts with participating partner CBOs. The districts also provide essential program support services, including snacks, facility use, and Instructional Aid certification.

In this leadership role, the Bay Area ASAS provides individual training sessions to each of the contracted agencies in Database Management, Quality Assurance and Youth Development principles. These sessions are provided at no cost to the agencies. Bay Area ASAS has also partnered with Region V Afterschool Partnership by involving its partner agencies in the Designing After School Leaders (DASL) and the Cal SAC Mentoring Program. Each of these programs entail months long commitments designed to train and prepare school site staff to become dynamic leaders in the afterschool field.

Previously the City of San Jose was the grantee for the ASES program, but when the program expanded with the release of Prop 49 funding, the district invited Bay Area ASAS to take over the management role of all its ASES sites while allowing existing CBO partners to remain under the new management structure. Bay Area ASAS remained the direct service provider at eleven sites with four partner CBOs providing direct program services at eight additional sites; these include, City of San Jose Parks & Recreation (at three sites), Catholic Charities (one site), YWCA (one site), Santa Clara Valley YMCA (three sites). One of the advantages of having an experienced agency oversee less experienced subcontracted agencies, an ASAS Director notes, is that if a provider fails to perform then ASAS is able to step in to provide programming at any given moment. This serves as a guarantee to the LEA that they will continually have afterschool programs operating at their funded school sites.

The partnership with Alum Rock Union Elementary is more limited as the district subcontracts the program provision at twenty elementary school sites to other CBOs. Bay Area ASAS is responsible for training all staff at those sites in addition to serving as the lead program provider at seven middle school sites. In the case of their partnership with the smaller Mount Pleasant School District, with only five schools (four elementary and one middle), Bay Area ASAS was able to support them in their effort to meet API and change their Program Improvement status. To this effect, the Bay Area ASAS worked closely with each site to help principals understand how the ASES and 21stCCIC funded afterschool program can support their schools' instructional goals by expanding the academic enrichment opportunities for their students.

Strong Relationships through Reflective Assessment and Ongoing Program Improvement

At sites where the relationship with principals is strongest, the afterschool program is viewed by the Principal and school as an extension of the core day.

—ASAS Assistant Director

Close coordination with principals to meet their school site goals and address the needs of students is the basis for the Bay Area ASAS effective partnership model. The quality of the relationship with the principal and staff at each site is a key to the program's success: "At sites where the relationship with principals is strongest, the afterschool program is viewed by the Principal and school as an extension of the core day," says the ASAS Associate Assistant Director.

To ensure the establishment of a strong relationship between the program and each school site, Bay Area ASAS staff meet with principals three times a year. In July-August they have an initial planning meeting prior to the program start up in the fall. A mid-year Program Quality Assessment (PQA) allows principals to provide their input on the afterschool program's strengths and areas for improvement. The mid-year PQA data informs the ASAS staff as they work collaboratively with principals to develop an action plan for making program improvements during the academic year. At the end of the school year, an Exit Meeting with the principals are held at each site to assess the year and determine any issues that need to be addressed while confirming what program components and administrative procedures and partnership arrangements have worked well [See *Principal Feedback Forms* (Initial and Year End), Appendix B].

In addition to this formal reflective assessment and feedback process, the Bay Area ASAS has developed a variety of strategies for ensuring that principals feel supported and view the agency's presence on their campus as an asset. They make sure the principal understands that the afterschool program can help out in small ways that make a difference for their school. For example, by working 10 hours a week during school hours, they can help to supervise lunch and to provide other kinds of assistance to teachers and the administration. ASAS continually highlights how the afterschool enrichment activities fill the gaps left by programs no longer offered during the school day such as music and physical education. The afterschool program also works with schools to advance students' academic development. At middle school sites ASAS intentionally hires teachers to help with the homework component and provide skilled academic support directly to students in subjects such as algebra and language arts. As another example, the afterschool program Site Supervisors in Alum Rock USD, work at their school sites as academic advisors during the day and are part of the Academic Advising team.

Further aligning their programming to local needs, ASAS identifies students' interests through surveys and focus groups to determine the kinds of enrichment activities to offer at each site. In San Jose, in particular, where no organized sports leagues existed for middle schools in 2000. ASAS has stepped in to provide a comprehensive sports program in eight-week cycles. Students are required to do their homework first in order to be eligible to play in any organized games the following week providing, at the same time, physical activity and an incentive to do well in school.

An important role of the afterschool programs that middle school and high school principals should consider is that they are avenues for students to gain access to quality service learning opportunities, the ASAS program manager's point out. Entourage, the Bay Area ASAS signature leadership and service-learning program, "allows students to participate in a variety of community service projects, and leadership development programs."

Another strategy is helping principals see the afterschool program as a way to connect with parents and to the community surrounding the school. According to ASAS leadership, this is most readily achieved through Culminating Events. Such events take place every twelve weeks at the elementary sites ASAS operates or six to eight weeks at middle schools, at the end of

each program curriculum cycle. The events are like an open house and are very well attended by parents and family members. Taking advantage of the family presence on their campus, schools coordinate their PTSA meetings to take place immediately following the afterschool program's culminating events, and in the same room, to encourage parent participation.

Bay Area ASAS proposes that representatives from CBO provider agencies be present at monthly principal meetings on a regular basis. In this way Bay Area ASAS works to gain principal and school support for its "comprehensive" afterschool program model. By being present at such meetings ASAS staff are able to maintain school administrators and teachers informed of the programs diverse activities and promote the notion that the afterschool program is providing their students with the equivalent of an "additional 90 days of schooling" a year.

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Supporting Schools and Students beyond Afterschool

The Bay Area ASAS has developed an innovative model for taking its support of the school program to the next level. Bay Area ASAS piloted a program at four middle schools working intentionally with the lowest performing students at these sites through its *Comprehensive Counseling Program*. The program provides Guidance Counselors for thirteen ASES middle school sites to provide supportive services to students most at risk of dropping out. According to the agency's website [www.bayallstars.org/programs/midcounseling.php] an ASAS Director of Leadership & Support Services (M.A. and PPS Credential) manages the program and oversees a cadre of interns, graduate students from local universities who are working toward their Masters Degree in Counselor Education and a Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Credential. The Intern Guidance Counselors work to "identify and address the needs of the students and provide more personalized support throughout the course of the year. They meet weekly with each student and serve as a support during and after the school day, monitoring progress in the core academic areas, and consistently meeting with teachers and school administrators in regards to the students' progress." Currently ASAS manages 80 student cases, designated at high risk for academic failure or behavioral problems. The ASAS case manager goes out to schools once a week to work with ASAS staff to make sure that the identified needs of these specific students are being met within the afterschool program.

The Comprehensive Counseling Program serves as a vital link between the core-day and afterschool program, working to ensure students take full advantage of a range of educational opportunities. The counselor works with the school community to engage parents and families, to increase family involvement and support for their child's educational attainment. The counselor provides individual academic counseling to assist with motivation and other challenges. These efforts are further enhanced through group activities that develop study and

life skills (e.g. organization, time management, problem solving, communication), and academic-orientated summer camp and field trip activities.

Challenges Working with Multiple CBO and LEA Partners

Some of the biggest challenges identified by the Bay Area ASAS leadership in their experience managing multiple CBO and LEA partners are related to accountability and program compliance. After experiencing the Categorical Program Monitoring (CPM) process, Bay Area ASAS was able to get partner agencies and school districts to become more responsive to meeting the requirements of the afterschool program. The CPM process helped the district “get up to speed” with the language of the ASES program facilitating the lead agency’s oversight of other CBO partners as they could “count on the district support,” to enforce their adherence to the legislative requirements of the program.

The Associate Assistant Director of the Bay Area ASAS—a former principal who understands the site level issues of operating an afterschool program and is charged with supervising site-level staff—states that one of the outcomes of the CPM process was that districts came to recognize the importance of accurate attendance record keeping and of making the recruitment and retention of students a priority. The CPM audit showed that some providers were not maintaining consistent attendance records; pointing to the need to develop a system for collecting and maintaining data records. As a result, the Bay Area ASAS developed clearer attendance guidelines for program staff to follow and instituted an internal audit system including monthly manual spot checks of records to address the issues revealed in the CPM. [See sample *Attendance Reporting Policy*, in Appendix B]

In managing subcontracted agencies, Bay Area ASAS points to the challenge of identifying those agencies that were fully invested in developing their programs in alignment with the ASES requirements and were not “merely chasing the check.” In this regard, part of the Bay Area ASAS role as an intermediary for districts is to support these partner agencies in making the necessary changes in their operations so that they meet ASES requirements.

A common challenge faced with managing young staff within ASAS and across partner agencies, is to encourage staff to move beyond their own educational schooling experience when helping students do homework; “what was taught in school is not the way that teachers are teaching now,” an ASAS Director points out. To solve this issue, he explains, ASAS staff observe teachers during the school day to refresh their memory regarding academic content and to expose them to the instructional approaches teachers take to convey that content. If a staff person does not know something that comes up during homework, they are expected to find out the answer and get back to their students.

Another area of challenge the Bay Area ASAS identified was around issues of funding. Instead of districts providing the contracted agency funds as they receive CDE payments—65% at program startup, with two additional 25% and 10% payments—districts continue to pay their contracted providers on a monthly basis. “Districts view CBOs providing afterschool program services in the

same way that they consider any service vendor or construction contractor,” an ASAS manager asserts. CBOs need money to start up programs. In the payment practices experienced by Bay Area ASAS and other agencies, the CBO is forced to carry costs of program start-up even though the District has already received the funding.

The ASAS leadership point out the importance of establishing relationships of trust between districts and their afterschool service providers. A relationship of trust may allow the district to supply the funds agencies need up front (at least 25%) to get the program started at the beginning of the school year. As a case in point, prior to the implementation of prop 49, the city of San Jose [the then LEA for the schools’ ASES funding] took 15% administrative costs from the grant leaving no funds for the contracted CBO to allocate to the administrative cost incurred operating the program. In contrast, with the San Jose Unified School District as the LEA, the District, takes only 1.5%. ASAS takes 2.5% leaving 9% for the contracted CBOs to cover the administrative costs of operating the afterschool program.

The partnership between the Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove (BGCGG) and Garden Grove Unified School District (GGUSD) exemplifies how a long standing relationship between an established CBO and LEA can evolve into a tightly woven network of support in the provision of afterschool services for students in an increasingly diverse and high need community.

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

“Blended” Emergency Form

Student Referral Guidelines & Criteria

Summer Training Program

Established more than forty years ago, the district serves students living in large, densely populated areas of six cities: Anaheim, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Santa Ana, Stanton, and Westminster. In the last three decades this region of Orange County has undergone significant demographic shifts, including the arrival of large numbers of Vietnamese and other Asian immigrants in the 1970s as well as an increasing Mexican immigrant population. The District is one of the largest in the state (ranking 11th in the state and 89th in the US) and is comprised of seventy schools: forty-seven elementary, ten intermediate, seven high schools, two continuation schools, two adult education centers, and two special education schools.

Of the GGUSD’s seventy schools the local Boys and Girls Club provides ASES programming at forty-seven sites: thirty-six elementary schools and nine intermediate schools. The Boys and Girls Club is the grantee for the Federal 21st CCLC-funded program at two high schools in the District as well. In addition the Club runs ten Family Literacy sites, a Truancy Reduction Center, a Family and Youth Outreach Center, and a Children’s Health Center. Close to 5000 children and teens participate daily in the District’s afterschool programs provided by the Boys and Girls Club.

The Boys and Girls Club executive director explains how the organization’s longstanding partnership with the Garden Grove School District has evolved over the past thirty years:

We started out with baby steps. The first formal meetings [back in the mid 1980s] were when we were providing transportation from the school sites to our club sites. At that time we realized there were certain policies in the District that we needed to follow in order pull our buses onto the school campuses. And then that kind of evolved into individual relationships with the different sites. And then we looked at using either District facilities or leasing property from the District to locate our club sites and signed some long term land leases in order to place portable buildings on the school campus and offer our afterschool program. At the time, the District had a surplus of classroom space. In the mid-nineties, 21st Century grants started coming along and I think that is when we finally started sharing space, where we counted on the school to provide it. At

that time the school had maximum enrollment so we were using primarily the multipurpose room and classroom areas for our power-hour study time. We started with four classrooms, and then moved up to ten sites, and [with Proposition 49 funds] now we're at forty-seven.

Ongoing Dialogue and a Shared Focus on the Needs of Youth

The collaboration is still very fluid, as we learn together every day ways to improve our programs and the positive impact they will have on our community. Its foundation is solid, built on years of a shared strong commitment to quality and a mutual dedication to doing 'what's best for our kids.'

—B&GC Director

As collaborative partners, the GGUSD and BGCGG are able to recognize the strengths that each partner brings to the table and are continually working to develop “proper policies, procedures and approaches which combine the best elements of the educational component with the youth development component, hopefully incorporating what is best for the students from each entity,” a GGUSD representative points out. A refreshing aspect of this team is willingness by both sides to learn by doing and engage in ongoing communication in the process: “Sometimes our success happens through trial and error but most

often through honest dialogue and learning from each other,” remarks the BGCGG director.

By their own account, the BGCGG and GGUSD attribute their partnership’s success to the trust that has evolved among the key people involved in managing the afterschool program within both organizations. Open and honest communication between all partner members “permits ongoing and meaningful daily conversations to assure program success and maximum program impact.” As a result of the solid relationships that exist, personnel at both the Boys and Girls Club and the District are able to work collaboratively to continually develop strategies that enhance communication, expand staff development opportunities, and strengthen program activities, with the ultimate goal of improving outcomes for the youth who participate in the afterschool program. After years of working together, the BGCGG leadership affirms that part of their partnership’s success rests on a vision of shared responsibility for the children and youth served:

The collaboration is still very fluid, as we learn together every day ways to improve our programs and the positive impact they will have on our community. Its foundation is solid, built on years of a shared strong commitment to quality and a mutual dedication to doing 'what's best for our kids.'

As further evidence of the level of integration of the afterschool program into the culture, curriculum and program design of the Garden Grove schools, sites will often include the afterschool program in their *School Plan for Student Achievement*, noting the contributions of the BGCGG afterschool program as a component of the overall school effort to support students. The District Director also comments on how the Boys and Girls Club also shares with

the GGUSD data they collect from surveys: “It’s a back and forth sharing of information and resources.” For example, they collaborate in maintaining accurate information on students: The District revised its emergency card to inform parents that their information may be released to the afterschool program staff. Also, the school might call the Boys and Girls Club if they are having trouble reaching a parent or vice versa. “We figure that between the both of us we can get the most up to date information,” states a program manager.

In addition, the Boys and Girls Club worked closely with the District to develop a detailed safety handbook to provide staff with clear safety protocols. The BGCGG staff now is included in the District’s new Emergency Services Training carried out at each school site. As the District administrator points out: “We all have the same children so we all have to have the same procedures.”

Furthermore, the partnership has made a unique effort to move beyond learning and enrichment programming to focus on the health and well being of students and the general community. The partnership works closely with school nurses to help educate afterschool staff about common health concerns of students such as asthma, seizures or allergies. Safety Partnership meetings, or *Medically Fragile Meetings* as they are sometimes called, are held on a monthly basis between District and afterschool program staff to discuss specific students with special health concerns. As the District leadership points out, “Because the Boys and Girls Club has many of these students in their program, we want to make sure we coordinate to keep our students safe.”

They also collaborate to complete reporting requirements to the California Department of Education, with Boys and Girls Club taking on the task of inputting all the data and the District reviewing and forwarding it on to the State. BGCGG updates the District on afterschool program attendance and gives notice of any attendance challenges at a given site. At that point the District works collaboratively to identify the causes of the low attendance and to help address whatever issues there may be. “Sometimes we sit down and brainstorm with the administrator at that site and together we bring that person along to figure out what the next steps are going to be,” the District administrator explains.

The partnership extends beyond the afterschool program, as one BGCGG representative notes, “Sometimes schools have special projects, like College Night. We will come and support their event with our staff. Whether our staff members are panelists, or helping with child care, we do collaborate outside of the afterschool program.”

A Collaborative Approach to Staff Development

The Garden Grove Unified School District’s K-12 curriculum specialist assigned to working with the Boys and Girls Club explains the ways by which the District works to enhance the professional competencies of the afterschool program staff and also to support teachers working as “Teacher Liaisons,” whose job is to facilitate the connection between the school day and afterschool program. In addition, the District helps provide volunteer tutors and trains

them to use AVID strategies to enhance the homework assistance component and as an intentional effort to align the day program with the afterschool program. The District curriculum specialist explains:

Coordinated District collaboration meetings between Teacher Liaisons and site coordinators take place regularly at each of the school sites. And we have a collaboration meeting with them twice a year; we just had one last week. At these meetings we hold coaching trainings where we train Teacher Liaisons and Site Coordinators how to coach line staff. We also help to put college AVID tutors in the [afterschool programs'] Power Hour (homework assistance component) at the intermediate level. We've recruited college tutors and we've given the tutors a college scholarship.

The District specialist also points out that the GGUSD and BGCGG partnership is further strengthened through a structured support system that ensures that afterschool program staff receive appropriate mentoring and that all parties have ample opportunity to come together and work collaboratively to create a seamless program. She details further:

Last year we started with quarterly meetings where we met with Teacher Liaisons and site coordinators four times a year. At each school site we have a teacher who is given a stipend to provide additional hours of service to the program, to the site line staff and to the supervisors. Through that process we also (were able to) determine some additional training and support needs about how we can problem-solve together.

We learned that classroom management and math strategies were two areas where they really wanted some additional training. So through our work together we coordinated additional trainings, whether it be that we put on the training ourselves, or we found some specialist teacher, who is in the classroom, to really strengthen that alignment on how we might teach math strategies [that are used] in the classroom and provide those skills to the line staff so that they can better support the students during Power Hour.

A District administrator explains how they are constantly seeking ways to integrate the afterschool and school day programs and to include the BGCGG staff in their trainings whenever possible:

Basically schools bring their whole site together as one: teachers, instructional aides and Boys and Girls Club staff all come together to receive the training. And another model would be that we might have some new employees attending the Search Institute training and we make sure that the Boys and Girls Club staff are included in those trainings too.

For instance, to advance the adoption of a Youth Development approach in both the classroom and afterschool program, the District has brought in experts to train school and afterschool program staff in the 40 Developmental ASSETs (Search Institute, 2009, www.search-institute.org).

The District is responsive to the afterschool program staffs' needs as well. If a site coordinator is interested in providing certain training topics to Boys and Girls Club staff, he or she is able to approach the District to make the request. The District secures a trainer, either a teacher on special assignment or the District curriculum and instruction staff. Examples of trainings provided include *Backwards Mapping*, math, and *Strategies for English Language Learners*.

Serving High Need Students and Advancing District Goals

The District and BCGG have also created a set of criteria to prioritize students who are able to enroll in the afterschool program, based on behavioral indicators, academic issues, and risk factors, such as lack of supervision at home [see *Student Referral Guidelines Appendix B*].

In addition, teachers and principals are asked to be involved in referring students that they think would benefit most from the program. The District Director further elaborates on this intentional and coordinated effort to serve students with the highest need:

If there is a school that we identified as needing extra support, we come together as a team to try to analyze, "What's our next step? [...]" It is a very collaborative process.

—District Director

Even the academic criteria [for selecting students to enroll in the afterschool program] are based on one of our goals that we set for our principals, namely the opportunity to address student's proficiency gaps. So we really try to parallel that language to show, 'you have a student that you want to support in your school and the afterschool program could possibly be one of the answers or one of the interventions that we have to support them.'

To this end, the District uses its Data Director database to identify all the programs and interventions in which a particular student may participate. The database also allows the District to exchange information with the BCGG regarding students enrolled in the program. At some sites the District runs blended fee-based and ASES programs with students unaware of the difference. All are considered Boys and Girls Club afterschool program participants. The District director of the K-12 Curriculum and Instruction Unit adds:

If there is a school that we identified as needing extra support, we come together as a team to try to analyze, "What's our next step? It's always very successful as we sit down and meet with people and come up with a plan on how we can improve. It is a very collaborative process.

For example, in developing academic goals for students participating in the afterschool program, the BGCGG program director explains how it involved the District:

We discussed the District academic goals and how we could work together to make sure that although [our goals] may sound different, they could still be the same. It's those kinds of conversations that are ongoing. We get policies and technical assistance from the School District and then we come up with the procedures for the program we are delivering. And then we collaborate on all of that as we move along.

To ensure that the program is meeting its goals, the District runs reports for the Boys and Girls Club semi-annually for analysis to determine outcomes for students participating in the afterschool program. The use of a database *DATA DIRECTOR* allows them to compare CST or Benchmark growth between ASES and non-ASES students. The specialized District staff supports the BGCGG staff in the data analysis of the data to help them figure out the best way to present the information to their different audiences. This too has evolved with the District making the ASES program part of general communications to principals, as a District administrator remarks:

There was a time when we started out that we would have a meeting with just the ASES principals [to discuss the afterschool program outcomes]; well now, anything that we have [related to our] ASES programs we present at the general principal meetings. Everybody hears it so it's part of the ongoing culture of what we do.

Efficiency and Flexibility in Program Management

The GGUSD website states that, “the District operates on a very lean management structure in which only a small percentage of the budget is directed to overhead and administration.” As a reflection of this ‘lean is better’ philosophy, the District administrator emphasizes that those primarily responsible for advancing the partnerships’ goals are a small but committed group:

The District isn't reaping any financial reward from this whatsoever.

—CBO Executive Director

We're a handful...we've had many people come down—because of the number of awards we've receive—and they come down to interview us and it's like they've got two or three people doing the same job... it's like there's ten of us and there's thirty of them. We don't have a whole lot of administrators.

BGCGG recognizes the collegial quality of the relationships that have evolved within the partnership as making such an efficient operation possible. As one of the CBO program leaders expresses:

Our communication is really consistent, I talk to at least one of the District representatives every day, sometimes more than once a day... it's a very open communication. We're very comfortable.

Consequently, instead, of bureaucratic administrative layers, the Garden Grove District and Boys and Girls Club partnership has taken a novel approach to dealing with some common issues of afterschool partnerships. For example, typical issues around shared facilities were addressed by demystifying the Districts' expectations and bringing the afterschool staff into a more informed and empowered position with regard to how to handle a range of matters concerning the use of the school campus for their program activities. In this way both sides of the partnership are more apt to work collaboratively to solve issues as they arise. The BGCGG Executive Director explains:

Speaking of holistic, actually we heard there were some glitches as far as janitorial and classroom maintenance issues that involve our staff. (In response,) the maintenance team sent a couple of people to handle a training session with our staff about how to maintain the facilities, and when to call the janitor if there is an issue or when to call maintenance at the end of the day.

For their part the District sees their relationship with their partner CBO as an evolving one in their effort to support the BGCGG and to make the day program and afterschool program as seamless as possible:

We do have an MOU together but it is pretty open and flexible. We do not charge for the use of facilities, we provide snacks and any thing they need for evaluation and research is provided. [...] What we try to make sure is that everything is aligned for our students no matter if it's before or after or during the school day

The BGCGG Executive Director emphasizes how the Districts' commitment to supporting the afterschool program is further evidenced by the fact that the District restricts its in-direct cost allocation to only 3% of the first \$25,000 of the ASES grant funds it receives. "The District is not reaping any financial reward from this whatsoever," observes the BGCGG director.

The Montebello Unified School District (MUSD) serves students from the cities of Bell Gardens, Commerce, Montebello, and portions of Downey, Los Angeles, Monterey Park, Pico Rivera, Rosemead and South San Gabriel—a region east of downtown Los Angeles within the broader metropolitan area of Los Angeles County.

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

*Program Newsletter; ICES Times
Annual Winter Tournament Festival
Youth Leadership Program; Hawaii
Leadership Academy*

MUSD is one of the largest districts in Los Angeles County with 18 elementary schools, 6 intermediate schools, and 4 high schools. Students at MUSD are predominantly Hispanic or Latino (92%), 4% are Asian or Pacific Islanders and roughly 3% are White. 50% percent of students are English Language Learners and 81% qualify for free and reduced meal program (www.montebello.k12.ca.us) Approximately 80-150 students participate in the afterschool program at each of the 16 Districts' ASES funded sites.

In addition to collaborating with the International Center of Education and Sports (ICES) to offer diverse and engaging afterschool learning, enrichment and recreational opportunities for their students, the District partners with other CBOs including the local YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, After-School All-Stars, Los Angeles and Woodcraft Rangers. For its part, ICES provides afterschool program services for five other school districts in Los Angeles County, ABC Unified, Hacienda La Puente Unified, Long Beach Unified, and Mountain View. (www.icesports.com)

The partnership between the International Center of Education and Sports and the Montebello Unified School District evolved quickly after the District first offered ICES the opportunity to run the afterschool program at one of its struggling intermediate school sites in early 2006. Within six months MUSD expanded its partnership with ICES to three additional intermediate schools given the success achieved at their first assigned site. In the words of the ICES President & CEO, “The key was recruiting the right staff; we brought in the Site Director and some of our really good staff from Long Beach and it went really well.”

The existence of a District managed afterschool program, argues the ICES General Manager, helps to create a sense of ownership and “an identity within the community.” “You come across the principal, you come across the teacher or the custodian and they know about the afterschool program. When you have an afterschool program in place at the district level, that makes all the difference in the world. It is well integrated with the school.”

Diverse Program Management Models and Collaborative Infrastructure

Although ICES and MUSD have years of experience with other successful partnerships around afterschool program provision, they communicate a shared understanding of what it takes to build an effective partnership and are particularly satisfied with how they have been able to work together during the past four years. ICES' general manager explains how this partnership has worked well for them:

The number one factor that contributes to the success at Montebello, compared with other districts, is that they have the Extended Learning Opportunity Program [office] and that's where the [District] program and site supervisors are based. [The office provides District] personnel [who] oversee our schools just like they are one of their schools. We have supervisors that also oversee sites. We have a communication structure in which the District is invested. They also oversee our sites. They're not just washing their hands, sitting back and letting us run the entire program. They are continually supporting us with the logistics of everyday programming.

These logistics become somewhat more complicated than usual in the case of MUSD in that the District operates its sixteen ASES funded afterschool programs using two types of program management models. Seven of its elementary sites represent a “blended” model where by the District maintains managerial oversight and District employees staff the site (including the Site Director), while partner agencies are contracted to provide key components of enrichment programming. At these “blended” sites, ICES Lead Coaches, supervised by a District Site Director, primarily deliver the agencies' well-developed physical education and sports programs.

In addition, ICES is responsible for managing four of its middle school sites. Initially, issues with unionized classified staff emerged when ICES took over schools formally ran by the District and staff employees were forced to move to other district ran sites. Because the District views the afterschool program as an extended learning opportunity program and maintains a strong communication structure to carry out its program planning, stakeholder engagement and problem solving these issues were gradually resolve.

One way that the partnership addressed the tensions that rose as a result of ICES' expansion to new sites was by insuring stakeholder input at the site level. Three ICES Regional Coordinators, charged with overseeing sites, work collaboratively with the District Program Supervisors who have a similar charge. ICES and District supervisors meet regularly and join the Site Directors at their monthly meeting with the principal. “It helps to align with the regular

They're not just washing their hands, sitting back and letting us run the entire program. They are continually supporting us with the logistics of everyday programming.

–ICES Program Manager

school day. It works beautifully, and fortunately everybody is on the same page everybody supports everyone else. It's a very happy relationship," affirms the President of ICES.

With time the ICES staff began to become more integrated into the District's staff development program. The District's Curriculum Specialist responsible for overseeing the afterschool program comments on how ICES became an increasingly integrated partner in its blended model approach:

Where before it may have been that the District personnel took on the academic component and ICES took on the enrichment or sports activities, since they are so adaptable to our policies, now we are able to send them to some trainings and actually have them do all our academic activities so they are able to function with more versatility. The Site Director and Principal have that variety available for the students.

Although the use of classified personnel from the District can become costly, she confirmed, "the financial aspect was not the main concern" in deciding to increase the role of ICES at its sites. "It was more that ICES had the ability to fill certain needs of the school," she argues, that propelled the District to expand the role of this partner agency within its afterschool program structure; increasing ICES responsibilities at their blended sites and assigning ICES to manage other sites.

The CEO and President of ICES recognizes that the success of their partnership with Montebello, "like any other business," rests on the quality of the personnel involved: "We got good staff, they've got great staff and it just works. There is a shared understanding and level of professionalism there." Key to building the staffs professional competencies are the high expectations and shared goal that makes this partnership work. The District Specialist concurs:

Once we started working with them, the collaboration went really great and we were able to get to the next level with them in our programs. With their support and us providing support to them as well.

One of the strengths of ICES, the organizations' leadership points out, is its' attention to screening staff and hiring personnel who "are of high quality and excel at what they do." ICES, maintains a *can do* approach, with agency leadership quick to resolve issues through open and frank communication with the District and school site personnel. "A phone call from me will do. If we have a problem then it gets resolved. It's the nature of the relationship," says the President and CEO.

Orienting Afterschool Staff—Creating Lesson Plans Aligned with School Goals

A District Curriculum Specialist—a credentialed teacher on special assignment—is dedicated to supporting the CBOs with lesson planning support and guidance in aligning the afterschool curriculum to the school day curriculum. The District also has three Program Supervisors who

each oversee eight to ten schools. They provide support to site staff to make sure they are in compliance for CPM.

Lesson planning is often a weakness for afterschool providers who struggle to align their curriculum to state standards and effectively implement disguised learning activities with academic content and skill development objectives. The ICES Program Manager elaborates on how the District support staff helped mentor their staff in this regard:

We had the activities down, however to put it on paper we weren't the best. With the arrival of the [District's curriculum specialists] as well as the trainings provided, our staff was able to pick up on what exactly a state standard is and how to articulate that, how to write out lesson plans on a monthly basis. So with the District in assistance we have been able to do lesson planning aligned with the academic standards.

MUSD holds all partner agencies to specific requirements and expectations, such as completing standards aligned lesson plans using a District created template. The District Specialist agrees that CBOs often have difficulty meeting district expectations to align their enrichment curriculum to standards, hence making it necessary to orient them in that task: "The standards can be overwhelming to them," so the aim of the District trainings are to "create a set of guidelines for afterschool staff to apply to the afterschool setting."

Subsequent to their participation in such trainings, ICES staff were expected to modify their program curriculum to reflect district expectations and began developing curriculum around monthly themes of interest to the youth that work to encourage their engagement and promote consistent program participation, while connecting to the knowledge and skills students are working on in the classrooms during the school day. According to the District Specialist, ICES was able to be responsive to the district expectations. She comments on how the ICES personnel have been able to respond to the Districts' trainings:

Some partners are able to take what we offer them and run with it. We had one training on lesson planning and by the next week a whole new set of lesson plans were submitted [by ICES] that were exactly how we would have like to see it. So the turnover is very quick they are able to take it, apply it and show how they deliver the lessons.

To further promote this link, staff development opportunities for the regular instructional staff and District lead trainings for the afterschool program staff at its District-lead sites are open to the partner agency staff. ICES also works with the District to organize trainings focused on specific topics such as a working with special needs students. Quarterly ICES agency-wide trainings focus on broader themes and in building staff competencies in enrichment and disguised learning activities and leading organized team sports. ICES also holds monthly meetings dedicated to critical topics such as access to higher education or substance abuse awareness.

ICES Site Directors conduct site-level trainings. They involve the principal in planning these trainings so they can address specific needs at that school. For example, at schools where that had experienced “lockdowns”, staff needed to know what to do exactly if that situation were to occur during the afterschool hours so training was provided. Also site-level trainings are opportunities for Directors to introduce or review ICES policies and coaching strategies with their staff. An ICES Site Director on special assignment provides basic support to Lead Coaches addressing any issues they have at their sites.

ICES and District program leadership agree that the quality of the personnel each partner is able to hire, train and involve in the ASP is a key factor to their success; they are all committed to making partnership work through flexibility, communication, and professional expectations of all staff.

Intentional Community Engagement Strengthens the Partnership

We look at the opinions of all our stakeholders. That is what we try to do as a district. Our stakeholders include parents, teachers and principals; those are our partners.

—District Regional Supervisor

The Montebello Unified School District appreciates that its CBO partners consider the culture and customs of the families they serve and take into account the input of various stakeholders. This intentional community engagement is a hallmark of the Montebello afterschool program: partners engage in communication through continued staff development trainings and monthly meetings, thus building the bridge between schools and communities. With regard to ICES they further note that the agency continues to adopt District policies and procedures while providing

quality services and working collaboratively with students, parents and the people in the community. As one of the District’s Regional Supervisors comments:

We look at the opinions of all our stakeholders. That is what we try to do as a district. [Our stakeholders include] parents, teachers and principals, those are our partners. So it’s very much site- based needs oriented, the demographics of that area [guide our program planning]. We try and get as much of their opinion prior to putting any contracts in place because we don’t want to just come in and say, “We want to do this”. It’s very much a team effort.

This approach is complemented by ICES’ ability to offer unique opportunities for parent involvement through their highly professional sports programming.

This effort to reach out to the entire school community is also expressed by the ICES President and CEO’s recognition of the importance of all members of that community:

We’re very aware of the need to be respectful and supportive of custodians, because they wield a lot of power [on a school site]. And it’s amazing how little things, like giving them a t-shirt or a ticket to a game will make a huge

difference. You just got to treat them with respect and let them know they are appreciated and that they're important.

The ICES leadership further insists that staff show respect for the students and community they serve through maintaining a strict agency dress code including the required use of the ICES uniform t-shirt at all times while on site or at a program event: *"It commands respect."*

ICES Site Directors are further encouraged to proactively work to identify supplementary sources to complement the ASES program and expand the opportunities they can offer youth. "They fund raise by reaching out to the local community around the school" states the Program Manager, to be able to provide exceptional programming such as the ICES summer Leadership Program that gave a group of twenty-five students the opportunity to go to Hawaii. In addition, ICES brings in resources from diverse community partners, including the LA Galaxy and Chivas Soccer Teams that provide students access to professional sports events. Long standing partnerships with Rio Hondo College, Cal Poly Pomona and the EPIC Program at Cal State LA allows ICES to recruit college students as mentors and to work as Lead Coaches.

Addressing Challenges as they Arise, Sharing the Costs and Sharing the Vision

Issues have been identified around the tracking of student attendance in the ASP. To address this the District adopted EZ Reports Data System that allows for more accurate site level record keeping and allows agency access to basic student demographic data for their own program development and reporting needs. To this effect, the ICES President remarks: "With Montebello it's the nature of the relationship that makes it easier to access information as long as you explain why you need this information."

A true partnership is shared cost. I've seen ICES come to the table with things. I've seen that on site where they share the costs of supplies or what not, because of our financial situation. That is a benefit of the relationship.

—District Specialist

Similarly, because of the relatively manageable size of the District—as compared to some of the larger districts with which ICES has partnerships—MUSD is perceived as more readily able address the needs of the program as they arise, "which is very difficult in [a larger district] because you have all these layers and all these people [to go through]," the President reflects. "The bottom line is to make it happen. The nice thing is to look at the big picture; you give a little here and get a little there. It's the people involved. "

The District and ICES have understood that each can contribute to the costs of operating the afterschool program. To this effect, the District Specialists points out:

A true partnership is shared cost. I've seen ICES come to the table with things. I've seen that on site where they share the costs of supplies or what not, because of our financial situation. That is a benefit of the relationship.

Similarly, ICES' Program Manager speaks of how the District supports them materially: "We are always included in any purchasing that the District does." He further points out that the afterschool program has access to equipment and curriculum materials that the District acquires.

They actually surprised me in Montebello with how willing they have been to offer assistance with uniforms, bussing and things like that [for our sports activities]. They've said, "We'll help you with the buses and with the uniforms". It's a great collaborative.

ICES' President further notes that their positive partnership experience has provided the agency with valuable knowledge for working more effectively with other partner LEAs:

We were in six other districts but we were able to get the guidelines [provided by Montebello] and use that with the other districts and it's been a tremendous help with our other programs.

In general ICES and MUSD leaders responsible for the afterschool program were highly satisfied with their partnership experience and were able to communicate a shared vision and sense of mutual responsibility for the quality of the programs they provide the youth of Montebello.

Woodcraft Rangers (WR), a community based organization, has served the children and youth of the greater Los Angeles area since 1922. Seventy years later, in 1992 the Nvision afterschool program was created in response to the changing demographics and needs of youth in the urban communities WR traditionally served. On the organization’s website the following statement is featured:

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

Teacher Liaison Meeting Agenda

Needs Assessment Survey

Collaborative Survey

After School Program Findings
(PowerPoint Presentation to School Board)

The organization’s programs are responsive to social trends and designed to help children mature into healthy, productive adults through positive experiences and age-appropriate challenges.

As one of the first partner agencies to be contracted by the Beyond the Bell Branch of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Woodcraft Rangers has been involved in the provision of ASES and 21stCCLC afterschool programs for over a decade working in partnership with the large metropolitan district of LAUSD as well as two other smaller districts in LA County, East Whittier and Hacienda La Puente. In addition WR operates programming at one community center and 3 high schools; and partners with Afterschool All Stars LA [another LAUSD contracted agency] to provide afterschool program services at three middle school sites in the District. Previous to 2006 WR was operating programming at Garvey School District with 21st Century funds.

In 2006 when the Prop 49 monies were released the Garvey School District—situated in the west San Gabriel Valley of the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area—was awarded half a million dollars in public funds for afterschool programming. The Garvey School District secured WR as its ASES program provider considering its experience working with LEAs in providing quality afterschool programming that meets the state and federal requirements. Based on a youth development approach to afterschool enrichment and learning, WR currently operates its Nvision program at 9 elementary schools and 2 intermediate schools of the Garvey School District, serving 90 to 120 students at each site.

Six Practices that Build Partnership Strength and Program Quality

The agency, with experience working with a number of LEAs in the Los Angeles area, characterizes its relationship with Garvey as a strong partnership founded on communication and real collaboration. A WR Regional Manager works directly with the school district to ensure that its Nvision program meets the local needs of the Garvey community. All stakeholders, from the school board members, to district administrators to classroom teachers and on-site program leaders are involved at some level in the planning, management and operation of the

Garvey Nvision afterschool program and are invested in its success. The goal is to create a seamless school day/afterschool experience for program participants. The afterschool program is viewed as an integral part of the district’s educational approach; rather than consider the WR staff as a separate entity using the school site for its own program activities, an intentional effort exists between both the LEA and CBO leadership to work collaboratively to achieve their goal of a seamless program. Specific ways that they work to this end include the following partnership practices:

1. Program oversight committee
2. Periodic collaborative retreats
3. Joint trainings
4. Shared resources
5. Teacher/District liaisons
6. Community involvement

The **oversight committee** is comprised of representatives from the school district (school principals, teacher liaisons, district coordinator, community businesses, parents) and Woodcraft Rangers staff (site coordinators and selected administrative staff) and provides governance, vision and direction to the Garvey afterschool program. At quarterly meetings, committee members discuss issues that arise and examine the program activities and accomplishments, accessing progress to determine what does and doesn’t work. Together the group comes up with possible solutions and reaches a consensus on the path to take to ensure that they are all working in a coherent manner toward quality afterschool program services for the Garvey community.

The Garvey school board also actively participates in the process. In the words of the WR director, “the Oversight Committee sees what’s going on at a district level over the site level. It sees the bigger picture.” Its role is to focus on continuous program improvement. The Committee investigates what new programming options exist in the field, what other public or private agencies might contribute to building the program, to provide access to facilities and new partnerships for the district. They work to promote involvement of parents and other governmental agencies in the community, such as partnering with Parks and Recreation.

Periodic **collaborative retreats encourage** understanding and cooperation between afterschool program staff, teachers, the principals of all schools in the district, and key administrators. Initially the brainchild of one of the school board members, the retreats take place for several hours with the participation of the broader school community and serve to foster camaraderie, respect and a sense of shared goals. Woodcraft and Garvey personnel get to know one another, discuss expectations and needs, and provide mutual support.

Linking the School Day and Afterschool: The Role of Teacher Liaisons & Resource Sharing

Additionally, afterschool staff participate in **joint trainings** with regular school instructional staff that are relevant to the work they do in the afterschool program. Likewise Woodcraft reciprocates by inviting Garvey teachers to their agency's sponsored trainings. For example, all Garvey elementary schools participate in Steven R. Covey's *The Leader in Me*, a student leadership program based on "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" along with the WR afterschool staff. In this way, the afterschool staff is incorporating what they learn from such joint trainings into their practices in the program, which further enhances and reinforces the school day curriculum.

Woodcraft Rangers houses Technology Carts in the classroom of a "champion" teacher (who supports and collaborates with the afterschool program) for students to use during the school day. The resource sharing extends to Woodcraft's Activity Coordinator for Technology and Garvey School District's technology staff who work cooperatively on equipment maintenance, operation, and training.

One of the ways that WR supports the collaborative is by **sharing** the unique **resources** the agency is able to secure with its host school sites. For example, Woodcraft Rangers has introduced sophisticated Technology Carts that include items such as computers, video and audio equipment, and cameras. While they were assembled with afterschool programming in mind, they also offer applications that can be valuable for in-school learning. Woodcraft Rangers shares its technology resources with its partner schools, housing a cart in the classroom of a "champion" teacher (who supports and collaborates with the afterschool program) for students to use during the school day. The resource sharing extends to Woodcraft's Activity Coordinator for Technology and Garvey School District's technology staff who work cooperatively on equipment maintenance, operation, and training.

Credentialed instructional staff assigned as **Teacher Liaisons** are at the school during the day and serve to link the ASP to the day program. The Teacher Liaisons' (TLs) dedicate five hours a week in their role as afterschool advocates at their site. They're responsible for raising awareness among teachers and general school staff about the afterschool programming and providing informational updates during school meetings, assisting in staff trainings, helping to arrange access to facilities and equipment needed by the afterschool program, and providing general assistance to students and staff during the afterschool homework hour. Teacher Liaisons also help to coordinate joint projects between the school and afterschool, such as creating a yearbook club and providing music classes. Teachers have been able to see the benefit of having afterschool staff extend and build on activities that they do not have the time to do during regular school hours. The TL maintains constant communication regarding activities so teachers understand the needs of the ASP regarding space and other issues and are more inclined to be supportive. In this way, TLs have become key to stabilizing the ASP, according to WR program manager, which has resulted in lower turnover rates for program staff in the last year.

Connecting with a Diverse Community

At the next level, a Principal is assigned to work as the District **Coordinator** with the Teacher Liaison, afterschool Site Coordinators and Activity Coordinators. The role of the district coordinator is to facilitate the flow of information between individual school sites, keep the district informed of any developments in the ASP and or issues that arise that merit the District's attention and to make sure policies and procedures are being implemented in a standardized fashion while performing a general monitor of programs to insure consistency of quality of service provision. In the words of WR leadership, The District Coordinator has the bigger picture. In some cases WR is included in District trainings and other reform efforts. The district coordinator position was introduced in the Fall 2008 with the role of facilitating the afterschool program's move into a more seamless approach with the day program: creating a coherent 8am to 6pm learning and enrichment model.

A hallmark of the WR program at Garvey is the extent of **community involvement** that the agency has actively sought to establish. The program manager explains,

We build and strengthen ties with our constituents by taking part in community activities, such as the Rosemead Harvest Festival, to get the word out about afterschool and highlight the relationship with Garvey. Our booth is operated and manned by Woodcraft Rangers, but it also includes signage from the school district. As we have become a familiar presence at community events, we are seen to care about the well being of the community, and that leads to increased participation and support.

Family Literacy Night is another program component that brings parents on to the school site with WR and the District sharing resources to implement the program.

WR further builds relationships with local business, such as Wal-Mart, and Ramada Inn. And reciprocally, the District introduced WR to their contacts at the Edison Company, which resulted in the agency being able to secure additional funds for the afterschool program while creating a more solid sustainability strategy.

We build and strengthen ties with our constituents by taking part in community activities [...] As we have become a familiar presence at community events, we are seen to care about the well being of the community, and that leads to increased participation and support.

Interestingly, one of the distinct challenges that the Garvey community presented to the WR was getting the District to understand the importance of incorporating "alternative" types at activities at specific sites, such as a skate park at a middle school. On the other hand, accustomed with working in predominately Latino communities, WR had to learn to accommodate the expectations of new cultural group. Garvey community is approximately 60% Asian. WR needed to understand the culture better and appropriately publicize the program to the

Garvey community and outreach to parents to inform them on the value of providing their children and youth a range of enrichment activities versus just tutoring and homework support during the afterschool hours. Recognizing the predominantly Asian community's perception of the role of the school to focus on the academic development of their children, WR takes serious their responsibility to educate parents, as well as school administrators and teachers, on the important role afterschool programs can have in addressing a range of developmental needs of school age youth.

Fostering a Collaborative Culture across Organizational Boundaries

WR chief executive officer emphasizes the open nature of their partnership with the Garvey School District, characterizing it as a true partnership where there is room for discussion and communication. She points out that key to that communication is the support provided by the District Coordinator who works as a liaison between the school site, district and WR. The WR regional Manager works directly with the Middle Schools and with the District Coordinator.

WR nurtures its relationship with schools by sponsoring annual Appreciation Breakfasts every December since 2005 with the participation of school principals and their site coordinators. WR also makes its staff available to support other school activities so that the school sees the Woodcraft Rangers staff and the afterschool program as partners in expanding and enhancing the learning that takes place during the regular school day. Furthermore, WR staff community attends an array of community events organized by the school and its partners helping to build the relationship with district. WR uses its private discretionary funds to pay staff time for work on events unrelated specifically to the provision of ASP services to youth.

Another key factor of the WR and Garvey SD partnership success is the active involvement of the district Board of Education and Superintendent who are highly supportive of the partnership and help to promote a collaborative culture, supported by retreats, appreciation breakfast noted above.

This partnership dedicates the time required, outside actual program provision, to plan together, share success stories and learn from each other. Principals are involved in the process and good discussions take place all the time, they have evolved into a learning community. These meetings have helped to develop a ***collaborative culture***. The youth get involved in this collaborative culture through the ASP youth leadership group, which reports to principal on the projects they are doing. The school administration has a say in the hiring of the teachers assistants to work in the afterschool program and often make recommendations for site coordinators. Finally, she points to the value of conducting a local evaluation that continually seeks feedback from students and other stakeholders through surveys, focus groups and regularly scheduled meetings with school site principals. "Everyone is on the same page: the objective is to do more for the kids," she affirms.

RURAL PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

BRIGHT FUTURES ASP, LUCIA MAR SCHOOL DISTRICT & MULTIPLE PARTNERS

Region 8 (San Luis Obispo County)—Medium Semi-Rural Program

The Lucia Mar Unified School serves the communities of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Halcyon, Nipomo, Oceano, Pismo Beach and Shell Beach within 550 square miles along the California Central Coast between Santa Maria and San Luis Obispo. It is the largest school district in San Luis Obispo County, with eleven elementary schools, three middle schools and three high schools under its jurisdiction. In recent years it has experienced significant growth and a number of construction projects, including two new school sites in addition to major renovations and new building construction at several existing sites. The District's 2009-2010 goals are to:

1. Ensure All Students Make Progress
2. Assess, Leverage and Maximize Resources
3. Improve Teamwork and Collaboration Throughout the Organization
4. Acknowledge, Communicate and Celebrate Success
(<http://www.lmusd.org>)

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

Sample Local School Site MOU

*Site Visit Worksheet
&
Communication Form*

Training Agenda

*Sample Program Schedule
(Spanish & English)*

Over a third of the District's 10,772 students are eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch and 16% are English Language Learners. Although the majority of students are white (55%) a large number of students are Latino (34%), with African American, Asian, and Filipinos each comprising 1%. Its elementary school sites range from 281-658 students with an average of one teacher for every twenty-one students (CDE Dataquest, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>).

To bring the ASES program to diverse students across such a large rural area, the Lucia Mar Unified School District established partnerships with four community based organizations (CBOs) within the different communities served: Nipomo Recreation, Arroyo Grande Recreation, the local Boys and Girls Club and the local YMCA. These four CBOs work with the School District to bring the Bright Futures Afterschool Program to ten schools (eight elementary and two middle schools) serving from 70 up to 200 students per site. The District also reaches out to other partners such as Colleges and Universities and other community organizations to provide other forms of support to the program such as volunteer tutors or guest speakers. The mission of the Bright Futures program is "to meet the needs of students and families by closing the achievement gap and providing hands-on academic support and enrichment that aligns with the instructional day in a safe environment." The Bright Futures Program Director points to "collegiality, collaboration, single-minded focus" as hallmarks of their partnership with the four

CBOs that allow them to work towards fulfilling this mission and “providing what students and families and schools need from this grant.”

The local management of grant funds and program operations does not mean that the Bright Futures programs are disconnected from each other, or that they remain isolated from the latest developments of the afterschool field. The District has a critical role in ensuring quality across sites through these support strategies:

1. Local site-level Administration of Program
2. Commitment to staff development
3. Regular site-level assessment and feedback
4. Flexible local curriculum design and ongoing coordination with the school day
5. Local flexibility in provider contracts

The District coordinates the grant across all funded sites with the District Program Coordinator reporting directly to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The District Assistant Superintendent and the School Board are only consulted for broader policy issues such as establishing or modifying an early release/late arrival policy or funding issues and other matters that require board approval.

Local Site-level Administration of Program

Foundational to the Bright Futures Program collaborative is a focus on local needs. To this effect, a unique MOU is developed for each individual school site between the Partner Agency for that site and the District and school site administration (not just one per partner agency as in most cases). The MOU clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the partner agency, School District, and school administration related to the operation of the Bright Futures After School Program at that site.

The development of each site MOU is a negotiating process of the provider agency (contracted CBO), site administration and District coming together to determine the specific nature of the afterschool partnership at a given site. Furthermore, CBO partners and the District point out that the MOUs are not set in stone and can be changed in response to the ongoing evolution of the program and needs of students. The collaborative leadership insists that the focus of all the stakeholders remains the students, “not so much who has control or say, but how can we all best serve our students.”

The site level MOU allows for strong local administration of sites; for example, the principal at each site has a say in what goes into the MOU as well as how grant funds for their school site are allocated. Some school principals get quite involved in making the MOU and afterschool management a very locally driven process. Both the District Program Administrator and partner agency leads agree that school site administrative support is key for a strong program

The *School Site Coordinator* plays a pivotal role, acting as a liaison between the school and the partner agency, helping to organize the program in alignment with the school's goals; if there is an issue with the afterschool program, they work in collaboration with the *CBO Site Coordinator* and agency staff to come to a feasible solution for everyone.

to develop. As an example of this support, partners agree that the program operates best at sites where the afterschool program has a dedicated room in which to operate. "When there is no dedicated room, agencies feel like they are shuffled from one place to another," a provider program manager explains.

Although each agency brings their own character to the program, the program is really developed at the site level, based on the needs of that particular community, and the goals of the program staff and the school leadership. The Principal at each site not only helps shape

the unique MOU for that site, but also has ongoing input in the program operations. In addition, each site has a District employee (usually a teacher) who is the *school* site coordinator, as well as an *agency* site coordinator. Teachers working in the afterschool program are paid by the District and hence remain employees of the District during the afterschool program; they receive a stipend (that supplements their regular pay) for the extra hours they dedicate to the Bright Futures program.

The School Site Coordinator (SC) plays a pivotal role, acting as a liaison between the school and the partner agency, helping to organize the program in alignment with the school's goals. If there is an issue with the afterschool program, such as facilities use, the School SC works in collaboration with the CBO Site Coordinator and provider agency staff to come to a feasible solution for everyone. The CBO Site Coordinator oversees the staff and makes sure that the program is running the way it should. The CBO Site Coordinator collaborates closely with the school's designated afterschool program Site Coordinator to assure that the CBO is meeting the schools' expectations and supporting its goals. In some cases the School and Program Site Coordinator is the same person; it varies from one to two people. In most cases you have the District representative, and the CBO representative collaborating at each site to run the program. The District leaves it up to the site to work out what is the best approach in support of a very flexible local management model.

Since the School Site Coordinator works in one capacity or another during the day (either as a teacher or other school support staff), he or she is able to have "an intuitive understanding of what the students need," as the Program Coordinator points out. She elaborates on this critical role played by the School Site Coordinator in bridging the school day with the afterschool program:

For example, [at one site the School Site Coordinator] is the computer tech at the school. She sees the kids in her computer lab and sees, whatever her assignment is that comes from the teacher. [...] She sees their successes and their struggles, but she also works as the lunchtime aide and on the playground with the kids. So

the kids all know her and know to go to her when they are struggling with something. They know that she is someone they can trust and share what they're struggling with. She attends staff meetings as well. Anything that the school staff experiences she is experiencing with them.

At another site, the Site Coordinator is a 6th grade teacher, and is able to communicate with his colleagues to learn the needs of students across grade levels. The District Program Coordinator speaks to the benefits of having teachers involved in the program:

I think that what's at the crux of it is that we have so many credentialed staff and such administrative support from the principals. It's not that what kids say they want is not important but a kid may not always say, "I need help with math." Whereas their teacher recognizes they need help in math or support in advancing in their writing program. They may be at grade level but maybe they need to go beyond their grade level. Teachers are in the classroom with the kids [which allows them] to recognize their students' strengths and they want to foster those strengths and support those kids who are struggling. I think this is really integral to our program and I think it really sets us apart from a lot of other programs.

Commitment to Staff Development

One of the requirements outlined in each of the MOUs is that the District supports ongoing training of partner agency staff in order to ensure that afterschool program staff across provider agencies have the appropriate competencies to address their local program needs while working towards common established program goals. The District therefore includes in its program budget ten hours of training for all afterschool staff [See sample *Recreation Leader Training Agenda* in Appendix B]. The District holds six hours of initial training for two days prior to school starting reviewing Positive Behavioral Management Strategies and how to align enrichment activities with the Standards: "If a Rec staff [CBO partner staff] is teaching a dance class they need to be aligning that somehow with the standards. So the Rec staff is trained in reading the standards and how to break those standards down and apply them to whatever classes they teach," explains the District's Program Coordinator.

Given the rural conditions of Lucia Mar school sites, dispersed across a large region, the Bright Futures afterschool program staff often have to travel outside their communities to take advantage of a range of opportunities (such as regional afterschool trainings and statewide conferences) to remain current on the best practices of the field. Also, provider agencies offer staff trainings during the school year that target their specific agency and program needs.

To maintain the collaborative informed and working together to achieve its goals, the District Coordinator meets monthly with the Site Coordinators from all the Bright Futures sites. In addition, regular Collaborative Meetings occur every two months with the leadership of all four partner CBOs and the District Coordinator. These meetings allow for the collective resolution of problems and issues as they emerge. One of the conclusions from a recent meeting was the

need for a greater degree of dissemination of information between the Districts and school sites, and among all partner leads. The collaborative proposed to engage in more consistent email and telephone contact given the physical distances between sites and the difficulty of meeting, which is one of the challenges of sustaining a rural collaborative.

Site Level Assessment and Feedback

To ensure that program quality is maintained in all sites across the Lucia Mar District’s geographically expansive jurisdiction, the District’s Program Coordinator conducts monthly site visits and administers periodic formal site assessments as a means to identify issues, strengths and inform program management and improvement efforts. During and subsequent to such visits, discussions with site staff allow for concerns to be expressed and issues identified, while developing together

I want to make sure they are understanding what our expectations are; and if there are any issues, that we are seeing them together and discussing together how to correct those issues.

—District Program Coordinator

effective strategies to address them on a site-to-site basis. Site visits are documented as well as the communications between the Site Coordinator, school administration, School Site Coordinator and provider agency Site Coordinator at each school site. [See Appendix B for sample *Site Visit Worksheet, Communication Form*].

The Bright Futures Communication Form is a simple means for the School and CBO Site Coordinators to focus on current issues in the program and to identify areas needing attention and report on the program’s successes. The Site Visit Worksheet allows the District Program Coordinator to provide succinct feedback to the afterschool program Site Coordinators by summarizing the program’s strengths and areas that need to be addressed based on observations of the program during the monthly site assessment visits and the Site Coordinators own assessments as reported in the Communication Form. After each visit, the Site Coordinator signs the completed Site Visit Worksheet to confirm that he or she has reviewed the information and is in agreement with the information presented. The information from these regular site assessments gets disseminated to the school and afterschool program staff at each site as well as to the leadership of each collaborative partner so that everyone understands what is going on at all the sites and to inform program improvement planning.

The Program Coordinator will also visit sites along with one of the partner agency supervisors. *“I want to make sure they are understanding what our expectations are; and if there are any issues, that we are seeing them together and discussing together how to correct those issues,”* she states. The Program Coordinator relates her interaction with an agency lead during one such joint visit to immediately address an issue with a particular staff person:

We saw a staff member who had a lack of interaction with the kids. If they are out with the kids because the kids need a break and they’re on the sand box or out on the swings, I still expect that staff member to be communicating, carrying

on a dialogue with the kids. This particular staff member was standing back and seemed disinterested and uninvolved with the kids. Well, that's not what we want and that's not what the kids need. So I turned to the [Partner Lead] and said, "How are you going to address this?" And then she shared what her plans were for supporting this staff member to get where we needed her. And she said, 'If she is unable to get where we need her, then we will let her go, but we will work with her first. So that's the collaborative effort here.'

The District continually works to support site staff and its partner agencies, making sure everyone is working towards program improvement goals and preparing ahead of time for the State auditing, i.e., Categorical Program Monitoring (CPM).

Local Curriculum Design and Ongoing Coordination with the School Day

Each school site has autonomy in deciding the specific curriculum it wants to implement in the afterschool program. This is done in coordination with the partner agency responsible for overseeing all afterschool services at that site. Partner agencies may also bring in other community resources to enhance the programming. "The sites determine for themselves what enrichment and what support the kids need," remarks the Program Director. The involvement of credentialed staff in coordination with the contracted community partner at each site allows for the provision of a diverse array of enrichment options for students during the afterschool hours [see sample *Bright Futures Course Description*].

Teachers not only provide high quality academic support, but also may lead enrichment classes based on their own interests and talents. Agency staff, as well, are encouraged to create courses based on their interests and talents and are provided guidance in District-led trainings on how to develop enrichment activities that are aligned to California standards [see *Recreational leader Training Agenda* in Appendix B].

The sites determine for themselves what enrichment and what support the kids need.

—District Program Coordinator

Another way that the District works to support the quality of the Bright Futures afterschool program across sites is through a site-based curriculum development model. The model includes the involvement of credentialed teachers in implementing the curriculum and the provision of District led trainings for CBO program staff.

Instructional day teachers are responsible for academic support in the afterschool program. For example, while a 5th grade teacher might provide focused math tutoring to students who need help in that subject area, teachers may also lead diverse enrichment classes. Teachers are paid for this through the afterschool program grant.

The District also offers curriculum materials that are grade level appropriate and standards-aligned for sites to consider for adoption. For example, the District purchased language arts

curriculum materials and organized a two-hour training for all CBO partner staff on their use. Some sites were able to purchase the curriculum, but the District also purchased a set for sites to check out on a temporary basis if they did not have sufficient funds in their budget for purchase. The District Program Coordinator explains how this local program design process occurs:

At [one school], for example, they are looking at math as the area they are struggling with. At another school they might find that 'Math is doing fine but we need work on writing.' So each school decides for itself. Each school site may have any number of sessions. Typically it's three but a school site may have any number of sessions. They may choose to run their classes every two months [while] another site may choose to run their classes every three months. That is determined by the [School] Site Coordinator, working in conjunction with the Rec Site Coordinator [the CBO lead at that site] and the principal, making sure that they are addressing the needs of the school.

Although the principal provides input and signs off on the final program design, the School Site Coordinator is the one responsible for the program at each site. *"Things are fluid and changing. If something needs to be changed then we're going to do it if that's what's best for the kids,"* the District Coordinator insists and provides an example of how the principal might seek the support of the afterschool program to meet the schools program goals:

With the release of the stimulus money at one site intervention programs were instituted that were only offered before school, but the principal approached the School Site Coordinator so that the afterschool program could support what the school was doing in the intervention program. A select number of students were provided with additional homework and tutoring support that built on what they were receiving in the regular school day.

Local Flexibility in Provider Contracts

The Lucia Mar Bright Futures Partnership shares some of the same problems and challenges of its larger urban counterparts. For example, partner agencies express the difficulties in receiving sufficient funding for start-up operation of the program. They point out that their agency is not paid for the prep-time staff require to get the program up and running; they only begin to earn funds once students are enrolled and attending. To help mitigate this problem, at the local level, some principals have allowed the program to start one week into the academic school year so that the ASP staff can prepare prior to students showing up. Still, as one CBO manager points out, other sites are expected to start up day one of school with no funding allocation prior for preparation.

With four different providers the District has to accommodate different perspectives and approaches. *"Some partners have strict guidelines by which they work, and for us as their employer, we need to come to an understanding of how they are going to meet our needs, and*

that can be difficult for them at times,” explains the District Coordinator. She gives an example: “We took the first two school days of the school year to provide training [for partner staff]. Three of our four collaborative partners were on board for that beautifully; but one of our [partners] had struggled with that because they believed that there would be kids that needed afterschool care that were not going to be getting it on those two days.” To solve this particular situation, the District agreed to allow the provider to retain an experienced staff person at the site [who had already completed the training] and to charge parents for the two days if they needed childcare. The Bright Futures staff attended the training. These kinds of snags in the partnership are usually worked out with this kind of mutual accommodation. The Program Coordinator affirms, “Most of the time we get wonderful support; I say, ‘These are needs and how are we going to meet the kids needs.’ And they have great ideas.”

Both sides are willing to come together for all involved. We're here for the kids.

—District Program Coordinator

The District and CBO leadership point to their open flow of communication—via telephone, email and in person—as having facilitated their collaboration and their ability to successfully operate the Bright Futures After School Program across disperse rural communities. The partnership is characterized as dynamic and flexible, with a shared objective of supporting students’ developmental and academic needs. In the words of one of the partners, *“Both sides are willing to come together for all involved. We’re here for the kids.”*

Region 8 (Kern County)—Small Rural Program

Sierra Sands Unified School District (SSUSD) serves students living in the rural northeast region of Kern County, surrounded by four mountain ranges and approximately an hour from the Lancaster/Palmdale area of northern Los Angeles County. SSUSD began operating an ASES afterschool program at three elementary school sites in March 2007 (serving approximately 210 students cumulatively). The District currently runs a previously funded *Before School* program and is seeking an additional Federal 21st CCLC grant, with the LEA as the lead, to fund two additional school sites and serve another 124 students.

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

*Matching Support Activities
for Collaborative Partners*

*Building Partnerships
(PowerPoint Presentation)*

MOU between District & Provider

ASES Program Requirements—MOU

ASES Program Plan

ASES Training & Program Schedule

Meeting Rural Partnership Challenges: Leveraging Scarce Community Resources

SSUSD has built a partnership with one of the few community-based organizations in the region, the Southern Sierra Boys and Girls Club (SSBGC). The District Program Director comments on the particular challenges of operating a rural program:

When you're in a small metropolitan area there may be [several] very well established nonprofits or corporations. What we have is a very isolated community that is two hours away from anything. Although we have Rotary and Kiwanis and some other service organizations, everyone's needs are so great that we all seem to go to the same service organization or company for support.

Fortunately, however, when the District pursued the opportunity to apply for ASES funds, the Boys and Girls Club (established in the community in 2000) was poised to step in and become the needed community partner. The District Director points out that the success of this partnership has been documented by parent surveys that rate the program highly.

With experience in providing out-of-school time programs based on youth development strategies, SSBGC offered this small district the expertise and ability to furnish and train personnel as well as design and oversee the afterschool program operations. As the fiscal agent, SSUSD oversees the budget, provision of snacks, purchasing, educational trainings and program curriculum, and has overall responsibility for the outcome of the District's ASES funded programs.

The SSUSD and SSBGC leadership attribute the success of their partnership to a mutual recognition of the strengths of each partner. As such, they are able to work collaboratively to deliver a quality program that combines a strong youth development approach with sound

educational and academic support component. Specifically, SSUSD provides the support of credentialed teachers, specialized and standards-based trainings, and lesson planning and curriculum development. SSBGC provides the program staff trained in youth development and ready to deliver an engaging afterschool program. SSBGC also provides national Boys and Girls Clubs of America youth development and youth safety and prevention curriculum in order to enrich the program.

This open collaboration starts with recognition of the expertise that each partner brings to the table and an intentional effort to design a program that builds on these strengths. This approach--that of valuing the resources and expertise of each partner--has made it possible to create strong links between the instructional day and the afterschool programs at each school site. Each site principal maintains constant communication with the site supervisors, with instructional day staff being very active in the afterschool program (thirteen instructional day teachers assist during the homework period). Teachers are able to provide one-on-one and small group instruction to students during the initial homework hour. These teachers are paid at the District's intervention rate either out of the afterschool program funds or the school's Title I funds. Paraprofessionals who work for the school district during the instructional day work also in the afterschool program.

On their part, the Boys and Girls Club staff make sure to be a part of the school community. The site supervisors attend school functions as well as school personnel meetings. The site supervisors and team leads work to coordinate the afterschool program schedule according to the instructional day lessons to ensure appropriate alignment between the school day and the afterschool program curriculum.

The SSBGC also serves as a conduit to bring in other community organizations that offer a range of services, such as the City of Ridgecrest. In addition, the SSBGC is granted access to the District's database and contributes time in the collection of attendance data to fulfill the grant's reporting requirements.

SSBGC staff work to market the program with brochures, parent-teacher conferences and on school sites during the day. For example, afterschool program staff come on campus during the school's recess time wearing SSBGC t-shirts and leading activities exemplary of activities done in the afterschool program. This serves as a way for SSBGC staff to build relationships with students and expose them to the kinds of engaging activities they will experience at the program.

The SSBGC makes an effort to act as fill-in service and support the school any way it can. To support the participation of students living a distance from their school site, for example, SSBGC provides transportation back from school to the student's original school site (under renovation and hence unable to host its own program) where parents can easily pick students up. At one school, the afterschool program provided the Christmas and holiday programming. At a recent School Board meeting, the SSBGC staff and students prepared a Power Point

presentation and helped to present three videos by students, which, the District Coordinator points out, helped to strengthen Board support for the afterschool program.

Extending Learning Afterschool: Creating a Seamless Program

The SSUSD & SSBGC partnership has worked closely to achieve close alignment between the afterschool programs and the instructional day. Constant communication between personnel is required as they engage in a conscious effort to blend the curriculum of the instructional day and afterschool programs. The District Program Coordinator explains:

We meet at least on a weekly basis and often times we're on the phone with each other every couple of days just to make sure that things are moving along smoothly, that any issues that come up get resolved at the lowest level possible. I kind of give her how it works within the school system and she gives me how it works within the non-profit.

Teachers and staff identify those components in the school day that can be extended into the afterschool program, such as *SPARK*, *Peacebuilders*, Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math, *GEMS* (Girls Enhancing Math and Science) and other project-based learning activities. The afterschool program is also viewed as a space for students to have access to an array of enrichment activities not possible during the school day, such as a football league, robotics engineering and music (led by a volunteer high school teacher) using Piano Wizard and guitar instruction [see *Sample Program Schedule* in Appendix B].

This alignment extends to staff development: SSBGC opens its trainings to all SSUSD personnel, and likewise, SSUSD opens its professional development series to all SSBGC staff. District personnel train SSBGC staff in standards and lesson planning. Recently, the afterschool programs' branch director attended a training facilitated by SSUSD on *English Learners and Students with Special Needs*. The Special ED training allowed the SSBGC program director to meet the District's special education teachers and to understand the IEP process (Individualized Educational Program for special needs students) and develop understanding of the distinction between ELL (English Language Learner) goals and English Language Development. Likewise, the *SPARK* physical activity training facilitated by SSBGC was open to teachers from SSUSD; SPARKS is an adopted PE curriculum in the District. "They had a great day on a Saturday. Teachers came and they were working hand in hand with the afterschool staff learning the PE activities and curriculum," the District Coordinator remarked. This cross training allows teachers and afterschool staff to share ideas and work collaboratively to support the regular day and extend learning to afternoon, promoting seamless programming [see *Sample Training Schedule* in Appendix B].

New afterschool program staff are oriented initially by spending time in a teacher's classroom during the first week. The District allows the SSBGC to use afterschool funds for this staff time. In this way, afterschool staff not only hear about the school rules, curriculum and classroom management approach employed by the school site, but are able to see and experience them in

action, and are therefore more likely to reflect a similar coherent approach in the afterschool program. As a result of their exposure to the professional culture and knowledge of educators, several afterschool program staff members have started their professional development towards becoming credentialed teachers. The District Coordinator explains,

We reimburse their people's time through the grant and instead of sitting them in a room and saying 'here is what the school believes in and here are all the rules,' we have them actually go see it at the school site by going into the classrooms. One thing that we do with the site supervisors is to assign them during the day at their school sites, so they're out at PE and the kids see their afterschool instructors during the daytime. And then we have, which I think is really unique, our teachers working with the afterschool staff after school. At every single school we have teachers go in and work during that really intensive hour when you're doing homework but you're also doing intervention.

These teachers are paid at the intervention rate using school Title I funds: "We're all working for the same purpose...we want all our kids to be successful so a lot of the in-fighting and territorialness that might occur other places, we really try to mitigate that here," she adds.

The SSBGC branch director further emphasizes how their tight partnership is reflective of the close knit communities they serve in describing how the mother of one of the afterschool program Site Supervisors works as a teacher during the school day, and how another staff person was a student at the actual school where he now works. In a demonstration of the high level of trust between the partners and openness on the part of the school district, Site Supervisors are given a school site key with access to all site facilities: classrooms, cafeteria, computer lab, library, etc.

We're all working for the same purpose...we want all our kids to be successful so a lot of the in-fighting and territoriality that might occur other places, we really try to mitigate that here.

—District Program Coordinator

Shared Program Oversight

This strong relationship between SSUSD and SSBGC translates into an authentically shared oversight of the program. The SSBGC is responsible for operating its program, but works closely with the District and each school site administrator to coordinate all aspects of program delivery. The District's appointed ASES administrator holds the title of *Coordinator of Special Projects, Assessment, and Technology*. With thirty-three years of experience working in the District, she is responsible for coordinating with all CBO partners and works as a liaison with the Superintendent, and School Board. She is also charged with reporting to the state and carrying out ongoing program assessments and the internal evaluation of the program. The Program Coordinator meets on a weekly basis with the SSBGC afterschool programs Branch Director to discuss programmatic elements and assessments and address any issues that arise. For example, to address an early release issue that was negatively impacting the afterschool ADA

(average daily attendance), in which parents picking up their students early was causing the District to lose funding, the SSBGC Director and staff worked collaboratively with the District to develop a revised program plan that the program coordinator then presented to the School Board for approval. [See sample *ASES Program Plan* in Appendix B].

Creative Fiscal Solutions

The SSUSD/SSBGC partnership has adopted a creative money flow approach that has worked to avoid some of the common fiscal challenges faced by other CBOs in operating afterschool programs in arrears of receiving payment for services. In Sierra Sands, the District takes the burden off the CBO, not expecting the SSBGC to operate the program without funds, by providing a substantial advance. The SSBGC pays this advance back through an MOU and the District retains a “management fee” [see sample MOU and list of *Partner Matching Support Activities* in Appendix B]. The District Program Coordinator explains how this unusual fiscal arrangement works:

Our relationship has been very important in our ability to take care of money flow. We've been able to be very creative on that. Non-profits don't always have a large amount of cash behind them whereas a school district has a little more ability to wait for funds to come in. I think that has been one of our strengths in that we work together to share the burden; we try to take the burden off the non-profit which may not have the cash flow to keep the programming running as the subcontractor. ...Through a Memorandum of Understanding we give Boys and Girls Club an advance and after a two-month period they start paying that back over a 10-month period so that it zeros out at the end... Plus we give them a little management fee on top of it.

The District handles all ordering of program supplies and the CBO uses all the funds allocated to them for salaries and benefits in addition to a small “indirect” retained by the contracted provider agency to cover management costs. The SSBGC Director takes larger purchasing requests to the Board, which approves a direct reimbursement instead of using an invoicing process. This allows for more immediate payment back to SSBGC for costs incurred. To allow some flexibility at the program site level to secure necessary supplies on a short notice, the SSBGC is able to purchase ad hoc items up to \$500, without prior authorization, and then is immediately reimbursed by the District. All invoicing by the CBO is paid within two weeks. As further evidence of SSUSD willingness to spend grant funds to meet the program needs and be supportive of their CBO partner in every way possible, the SSBGC Director relates how she presented a list of trainings to the District for her staff to attend and had it immediately approved by the Board. In light of this supportive fiscal policy and collaborative management style, the SSBGC director states, “I am very grateful to the District.”

Shared Mission of Supporting Youth and Building Program Sustainability

The collaboration between the Sierra Sands Unified School District and Sierra Sands Boys & Girls Club has provided the children of this rural community with a diverse range of educational services and enrichment experiences that may not have been possible without this unique partnership. As a small rural community, the partners truly view all the children as their own and consider collaboration as a natural part of the community culture. Still, it takes an intentional effort to build the kind of relationships that create new opportunities for the children and to grow and to sustain the afterschool program into the future. In the words of the program coordinator, a successful partnership needs to “pay attention to the relationships to maintain an effective involvement of all stakeholders, including site supervisors, principals, Boys and Girls Club administration, and the School District.” She adds,

The key is creating a “web” of communication where all players are part of the system and can reach out directly to each other and maintain the program operating and growing beyond the efforts of an individual.

We’re always working together. It’s always a continuing challenge to make sure that everyone affected by the program or who has any kind of involvement in the program stays in the loop...Because, even if they don’t have day-to-day involvement with the program, it is very important to keep their trust, their knowledge, in order to keep them heavily involved. We need to continue building that. It’s not as strong as I would like it to be, but we’ve managed to get past every challenge we’ve had. If you don’t pay attention to that relationship it will fall apart. Even if everything is going well, you still need to nurture it. [...] You have to build a relationship...so when I decide to retire, the program is not going to go under because a person is missing from it. For sustainability you must have all stakeholders involved.

The key is creating a “web” of communication where all players are part of the system and can reach out directly to each other and maintain the program’s operating and growing beyond the efforts of any one individual. For the Program Coordinator at the District, this is one of SSUSD’s challenges: to expand that network of stakeholders, reaching out to the community. She elaborates, “We’re not where we want to be in terms of having those other relationships so cemented and into the web of support that if one person left we could still provide the program. We want to make sure that all our strings into the community are strong.”

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

MT. DIABLO CARES & MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH BAY AREA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Region 4 (Contra Costa County)—Medium Sized Suburban Program

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District serves the suburban community of the East San Francisco Bay Area, and is one of the largest school districts in the state of California, with over 56 school sites and programs across 150 square miles, including cities of Concord, Pleasant Hill, Clayton and portions of Walnut Creek and Martinez, as well as unincorporated areas, including Lafayette, Pacheco, and Bay Point (www.mdusd.org) The Mt. Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) manages its afterschool programs—including twelve elementary, four middle, and two high school programs—under an umbrella called Mt. Diablo CARES, the Collaborative for Academic, Recreation & Enrichment for Students (www.mtdiablocares.org).

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

Student Emergency Card

Enrollment Form
(English and Spanish)

Mt. Diablo CARES is a partnership between the Mt. Diablo School Districts (the LEA) and three main Community Based Organizations (CBOs):

- 1) Ambrose Park & Recreation District [serving the unincorporated area of Baypoint]
- 2) City of Concord Community and Recreation Services
- 3) Bay Area Community Resources [serving as a fiscal agent for employee payments].

The Mt. Diablo CARES website points out that three main agencies in this unique partnership serve “overlapping populations,” including 2000 elementary through high school students of MDUSD with the following demographic profile: about half Latino (53%), 15% African American, 20% White, and a few Asian Pacific Islander (7%), with another 5% designated “Other Non-White”.

Other community partners include, Contra Costa County (CCC) After School 4 All Collaborative, St. Mary's College REACH Program, UC Cooperative Extension, Concord Police Department, YMCA, Diablo Valley Golf Course, NEWKids Partnership CCC Health Services, Kaiser and CCC Office of Education among others, each playing different roles in the collaborative. The collaborative provides a range of youth services with a successful teen center. Its afterschool program includes: Homework Help, Academic Intervention Program, ASPIRE Supplemental Educational Services, Nutrition Education and Cooking, Dance, Arts and Crafts, Science, SPARKS physical activity program, Gardening and Field Trips, and a School Sports program offered at the four Middle Schools. Mt. Diablo CARES, organizes its schools and CBO partnerships into three “Cadres”: 1) Ambrose [all the programs in Bay Point]; 2) Concord [3 middle schools, 2 elementary]; 3) Bay Area Community Resources 6 elementary schools and 2 high schools [the fiscal agent].

According to the Director of Development for Mt. Diablo Unified School District and previous administrator for Mt. Diablo CARES, the partnership has stabilized after several years yet is still always working to establish a systemic infrastructure. She argues that a stronger sense of “stakeholder” identity exists with the Ambrose Parks and Recreation and the City of Concord Community and Recreation Services than with the Bay Area Community Resources agency, which operates more as a “logistics arm” and is not involved with policy or decision-making. This set-up is intentional as BACR offers two options for clients – to either serve as a fiscal and logistics arm or as a program manager.

While all the Cadres work for CARES, the paychecks and HR logistics for employees in each Cadre are from respective CBOs. This consistency across agencies supports the collective purpose and mission of Mt. Diablo CARES being “Children Learning to Change the World”.

Contra Costa County (CCC) has also designed and implemented a unique collaborative relationship between several school districts (LEAs) in the county—partnering in areas of fundraising, programming, evaluation and technical support purposes. This collaboration is called “After School 4 All”. Although this case study focuses primarily on the operation and practices of Mt. Diablo CARES, the Contra Costa County After School 4 All collaborative is an interesting vehicle to leverage resources and support for 21st CCLC and ASES programs across a larger geographic region.

Decision Making Structures and Leadership Characteristics

One of the critical components of Mt. Diablo CARES is its two-tier leadership structure comprised of a Leadership Team (leaders closer to front-line services and daily management) and an Executive Board (heads of partner organizations). The Board is comprised of top leaders from each of the key agencies, site principals and afterschool staff and meets every other month. Since 1990, they have come together to apply for grants, work with advisory boards and steering committees, and identify partners. As a protocol, the Executive Board has the final approval of decisions.

The Leadership Team is the operating management body—comprised of daily leaders for the programming—and represents the real partnership of engaging everybody in decision-making. The Team meets weekly and talks about everything from new opportunities in nutrition and fitness to appropriate funding proposals. The Team operates as the “think tank” that knows what is going on at the school sites, how to manage the site coordinators, and gives the Program Administrator a real-time view of program conditions. The Director of Development believes that this two-tier decision-making structure distinguishes CARES’s CBO partnerships from those that most other LEA have established with their afterschool providers:

What I hear about in other districts is different, where they contract the CBO for services but they are not engaged as real partners. In our case, we engage these partners in leadership and decision-making about program design; building our growth model . . . that’s the uniqueness of Mt. Diablo CARES. Of course, there

may be times where the School District has to make the ultimate decision, but it's not without thoughtful debate and discussion. Over the years, there have been only a few really hard calls. Most decisions have been made collaboratively.

Partnership leadership recognize that when there have been challenging calls; they have been around the usual hot-spot areas of Finance/Budgeting, Curriculum/Content, and Human Resources (hiring, firing). At times, there have been issues around personnel decisions. The beginning of the school year tends to be more cumbersome, getting to the common view of “what programs should look like?”

Creating a Consistent Curriculum Approach across Diverse Programs

While Mt. Diablo CARES sites are not “cookie cutter programming,” they do follow a template framework so that there is some consistency across programs. This is a written plan/contract that is designed, discussed, and agreed-to before the school year starts. The Director of Development explains how the use of a common template for curriculum design across agencies helps to address issues of consistency in program quality:

Therefore, if it veers too far from the vision, we can ask, ‘Where is the nutrition piece? Where are the four days of homework assistance? Where is the gardening activity?’ Then we can discuss our issues within that framework and think about how to get it back on-track. We can talk about it because it is ‘in print’ and there’s not a lot of gray area.

Notwithstanding these template frameworks, she notes that you can go to programs across the Cadres and see distinct differences based on the communities and needs – they are not assembly-line programs.

Managing Multiple Funding Sources through Trust and a View to Sustainability

Lots of people have been involved since the beginning or for a long time. These are people who are invested in the program for the long term. [...] The infrastructure of the partnership and collaboration is homegrown [...] it really feels like a family.

—MDUSD Development Director

With regard to site level money, Mt. Diablo CARES uses a practice where the Program Administrator reviews the annual budget with each school site and reserves a portion of funding for the district (marked for “executive decisions”). Further, while the district (LEA) works with each school and CBO for decisions on the CDE afterschool money (i.e., 21st CCLC and ASES grants), the LEA retains decision-making on their Supplemental Educational Services (SES) funding. Thus, for money that directly affects CARES programming, the CBOs are integrated into decision-making.

A big part of any successful partnership is the establishment of trust on all sides—a common belief that everybody is working toward the same goal and not trying to gain an unfair advantage. While partners know that the LEA often has the final say on hard decisions, that power is not used often. In the view of the collaborative’s Director of Development, Mt. Diablo is unlike larger cities or school districts, where the LEA structure may be more top-down and directive; “I do believe that our partners feel like they have a voice and we’re in agreement 90% of the time.”

Further, the Leadership Team exhibits great care for each other and “have each other’s back.” According to the Development Director:

Lots of people have been involved since the beginning or for a long time. These are people who are invested in the program for the long term. [There’s been] hardly any turnover, and that makes a big difference. The infrastructure of the partnership and collaboration is homegrown. With very few missteps in the staffing over all these years, it really feels like a family.

Keys to Successful Partnerships among Diverse CBOs and City Agencies

Mt. Diablo CARES has relationships with CBOs and city agencies that are both unique and instructive. “Districts and LEAs cannot get caught up in only doing things that they benefit from. That’s where CBOs get turned off. If it doesn’t seem attractive to both sides then why do it?” The Director of Development highlights some of the key characteristics of their partnership model that could help other LEAs working in partnership with CBOs around afterschool provision for students; these are summarized below.

Working with Diverse Lead Agencies—To begin with, the requirements of each Lead Agency are extremely synchronous across agency types. CARES works with three organizations (two city parks/recreation agencies and one CBO) to manage its three Cadres of program sites. All the organizations under the “umbrella” of CARES agree to the following set of requirements:

1. All individuals have the same salary range, the same professional development (PD) opportunities, and the same orientation process.
2. While the employee paychecks come from different agencies, the expectations must be the same.

This is a critical synchronicity. According to the Development Director, getting each disparate agency on the same page—to agree to the same pay scale-per-position and employee practices across all programs—is one of the biggest factors contributing to CARES’s successful partnerships. This identical salary-to-position structure is at the heart of CARES’s cooperative atmosphere. The Development Director explains:

You don't have people doing the same job for different pay at different places, which could cause lots of misunderstanding and problems. There is a much more systemic consistency—uniformity with size and set-up.

At the same time, she is quick to point out that this synchronicity across agencies is not without its challenges:

Of course, some agencies may be closer to [our] particular vision of a program. But then, it's just a matter of getting it closer, finding the technical assistance to support them. I feel that it's always respectful, but also honest about where we are not meeting requirements and how to get there. Every year is different as well. Some programs are stronger than others. It is a fluid but continual learning cycle.

Finally, the MDUSD Development Director also notes that this type of synchronicity may be much more difficult or even impossible in very large LEAs with high numbers of program sites and lead partner agencies. For example, comparing Mt. Diablo to Oakland (with over 90 sites) she cautions, “I don’t know how it could physically happen, unless 4-5 very large Lead Agencies agree to the same. For us, we created those policies as a group with the three [CBO and city agencies].”

*Working with “Service Provider” Agencies: Two Levels for CBOs—*Aside from Lead Agencies, Mt. Diablo programs also work with CBOs that provide arts, sports, nutrition, youth development, mentoring, and other services and components. While managing a wide pool of players causes the regular challenges for grant compliance (e.g., maintaining adult-student ratios, academic alignment), CARES has practices to reduce risk and conflicts. These practices address specific conditions of the two levels of CBO partners:

Level 1: Contractors & Turnkey Teaching

For the most part, CARES programs have a strong structure with the requirement that the program be comprised of 1/3 academics, 1/3 enrichment, and 1/3 nutritional programming. In this structure, the program may hire a CBO such as MOCHA (Museum of Children’s Art) or Young Audiences to come in and run and teach a “specialty class” that fulfill a specific requirement. The Site Coordinator manages each site’s slate of instructors and the CBO enters a “turnkey” situation – “*we’ve already got the afterschool program running, and they come on board to teach a segment.*” In this category, Mt. Diablo views the CBOs as a contractor rather than a partner – i.e., they *do not participate in decision-making* for the program.

Level 2: CBO Providers Plus+

In recent years, CARES has also developed some augmented roles for CBOs that may offer more than “teaching a segment.” In this category—termed here as “Provider Plus+”—a CBO or other type organization may come in to provide enhanced services, staff training, or student services at-scale.

From CARES’s perspective, these relationships require two important considerations: 1) conducting more due diligence to ensure fairness to CARES (perhaps contrasted to the Level 1 CARES employer-contractor relationship); 2) doing some bulk rate analysis, and using a seasonal or cyclical approach for CARES’s current needs (e.g., CARES is currently very nutrition-focused with seven hours per week at each site).

One type of “Provider Plus+” would be the “at-scale” provider. A CBO or organization such as 24 Hour Fitness could negotiate with CARES (here’s what we can provide to you, here’s the price, how can we make this win-win). One specific example is with Diablo Valley Golf, which has its own grant to provide golf lessons to students. CARES negotiated with them—if they provided services at one group of schools, CARES would give them another group to help fulfill their grant. In these cases, the relationship is more than paid service teaching (the contractor category); it’s a higher level of services. Notably, it may not involve “higher pay” to the CBO, just another arrangement with enhanced service.

Another example of “Provider Plus+” is CARES’s growing relationships with Contra Costa Health Services (a collaborative of groups) that provides professional development and physical education activities (e.g., SPARKS). In this case, CARES actually brings them to the table in terms of decisions regarding where to go next with their program development.

Finally, one interesting note for CARES is that they do not usually use the same agencies that provide in-school services for the day program (e.g., an art program during the school day is also used for afterschool). While often efficient and cost-effective in other districts, this set-up is not common in Mt. Diablo. One reason is that the public school day programs do not currently have a lot of enrichment, recreation, or nutritional activities anymore because of their budget cuts.

Supporting Academics: The Power of Integrating Different Funding Streams

At first glance, CARES’s academic component may appear more fluid and broad than other LEAs. However, CARES’s practice of integrating Supplemental Education Services (a Federal Title I academic intervention program) with afterschool seems to provide the district with programs that safely satisfy CDE statutory requirements. The critical takeaway practice is that knowing how to integrate and maximize different streams of funding and programs will yield incredibly high leverage, efficiency, and effectiveness. Key practices of this comprehensive afterschool approach are outlined below.

Balancing Academics and Enrichment—As the MDUSD Development Director relates, historically there has been a battle between “being too academic” and “not being academic enough.” When she started, she believed that afterschool programs should be 50/50 (academics/enrichment and recreation), fearing that students might avoid coming to “more school.” Today, the programs use a more comprehensive blending that tries to infuse academics into the enrichment classes, but does not require any submitting lesson plans tied to

academics, as a result most programs are able to balance their academics, enrichment, and nutrition curriculum.

With regard to the statutory “Academic Liaison requirements” of ASES and 21st CCLC, the Development Director notes that although CDE has these requirements on the books, they do not outline in detail “what it is supposed to look like . . . there’s no rubric.” CARES’s programs employ an Academic Liaison (e.g., a credentialed teacher to work on academic alignment, coordinating the homework support, intervention and tutoring, performing direct teaching to high-needs students); but the programs also explicitly count “homework help” as academics and thus far, Principals have not requested stronger academic instruction in the afterschool programs. However, she also notes that Mt. Diablo “has not been through the formal Categorical Program Monitoring audit process yet, and it will be informative to see their recommendations. Staff, however, feel confident that academics is imbedded throughout the day and is an integral part of the CARES program.”

Centralizing SES and Afterschool in the Same Department—Whereas many LEAs struggle with trying to “get CBOs more aligned to the school’s academic programs,” CARES addresses the challenge area through its CBO contractor approach (*see above*, hiring contractors to do a turnkey job) and by tying afterschool academics directly to “intervention.” “Intervention” as a term of art requires following a more proscribed path from the California Department of Education’s intervention money and programs—the most prominent being the SES categorical funding, a federal program.

One reason that the CARES department feels comfortable with academic requirements is because of the LEA’s centralizing of SES interventions and afterschool into the same department. This helps to build support for the program among principals and teachers. The Development Director explains:

By integrating SES school year interventions and strategies with afterschool, it seems that we end up making programs that meet all the academic requirements.

Thus, in Mt. Diablo, the Program Administrator is in charge of ASES, 21st CCLC, and the SES programs. Eliminating the need to go through multiple departments and personnel to manage those funds cuts through potentially crippling district bureaucracy and creates comprehensive programs. As required by CDE, the district uses the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch to determine the SES eligibility of students. Students at eligible schools are then invited to participate in SES and their parents have the opportunity to choose a SES provider among the state’s approved provider agencies. Most parents choose CARES because it offers SES services at the school site, and

The SES federal program allows CARES to incorporate academic strategies, such as targeted tutoring assistance for SES eligible students, along with computer-based intervention software, to provide a more comprehensive afterschool program. Thus, the programs are “complementary” rather than “competing.”

many of their children are already enrolled in the CARES afterschool program. The SES federal program allows CARES to incorporate academic strategies, such as targeted tutoring assistance for SES eligible students, along with computer-based intervention software, to provide a more comprehensive afterschool program. Thus, the programs are “complementary” rather than “competing.”

The Power of Understanding Streams and Integrating for High Leverage—This simple best practice of centralizing and merging SES and afterschool into one department that designs comprehensive programs is a critical difference from many LEAs that seem to operate parallel and competing programs. Even when both funding programs are in the same department, many LEAs continue to create two or more programs on the same campus—creating greater bureaucracy, generating unnecessary competition for students and attendance, and fostering a non-cooperative culture between teachers, schools, and CBOs. For Development Director, centralizing gave her the foresight and ability to “*know what to ask*.” In her words,

I knew how to connect all these streams into a comprehensive and effective program. Many people are not familiar with hourly intervention funds. If you know what to look for, who to ask, and then how to consolidate it into one department, you can explain how it’s a win-win for everybody. You can sell it to Principals; explain how tying it to afterschool will help them. And then, they’ll be behind it. You can sell it, show it, and build a set-up that is better for all sides. There’s no need to have everybody trying to do it separately.

The Development Director notes that LEAs have to know more than the “list” of available public funds and programs—they need to understand how integrating these streams makes sense, which ones fit together well, how you can do it well. *The Bay Area Partnership and The Finance Project* have developed one guidebook that helps to demystify the various CDE streams and gives a visual of “how it’s possible.” A critical understanding is how to lock-fit the streams and programming.

Unfortunately, new staff usually don’t know the nuance and possibilities—the daily burdens are overwhelming, and many afterschool department (which may be under-staffed) are inundated with just keeping up and putting out fires. Mt. Diablo CARES has the advantage of a team that has been together for almost a decade—and thus, have a strong infrastructure that allowed them to take advantage of opportunities when they became available.

Working with Principals: Establishing Trust, Setting the Tone and Resolving Conflicts

Successful afterschool departments and CBOs require positive relationships with school site Principals. For many programs, the breakdown in CBO/City Agency partnerships is at the front-line site level, where Principals and afterschool program staff interface. In the early years, CARES may have felt that the schools, CBOs and agencies were “partners,” but they didn’t always have the Principals involved. Many Principals would say, “Go for it, but I don’t want to

be a part of it.” Once CARES got the programs into place, the staff had to backtrack and get Principals up to speed.

Today, the picture differs greatly. The Leadership Team works with Principals monthly. There are two Principals on the Executive Board. CARES has established better systems and structures to ensure better communications with Principals. While issues and conflicts arise at times, there is stronger trust and “benefit of the doubt” on the part of Principals. In recent years, more Principals view afterschool as “our” program, not “yours.” Principals seem aware that they cannot just go to the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent to try to “opt out” of the afterschool program because the District administration sees this as a service for the students (not to be removed simply because a certain Principal is upset). The culture has shifted from, “Why do I have to have this program” to “When get I get an afterschool program, at my school”.

One common challenge for afterschool programs is the use of teacher classroom space from 3pm-6pm. Even in a long-established structure such as CARES, “sharing space” continues to be problematic with some teachers “who need their space.” When these conflicts arise, the Principal is key to alignment and cooperation between teachers and afterschool staff. When the Principal sets the tone that the afterschool program is “our” program for “our” kids, then problems are usually resolved. For example, a supportive Principal may explain that the afterschool program does not “choose” specific teachers’ classrooms—she/he can clarify or set up equitable systems such as “rotating classrooms by quarters” or “using the classrooms that have most students enrolled in the program and working on that teacher’s assigned homework.” When a Principal is on-board, even the perennial problem of space can be resolved.

Creating Culture: Longevity, Stability, and Learning

Ultimately, one of the big lessons is about the culture: it’s not just a job—with the longevity we have with people in the afterschool department and field—it’s a passion.

—MDUSD Development Director

As noted in the introduction, Mt. Diablo CARES has benefitted greatly from its stable staffing over a long period of time—the rewards are invaluable.

Longevity Breeds Culture of Trust—As the rough spots of organizational development have been overcome, the afterschool programs of the CARES partnership are now valued by the district, the parents, and the schools. Systems are in place, communication channels are clear, and established chains of command help to resolve conflict.

Recalling the early days, the MDUSD Development Director initially felt that she was stepping in to mediate with schools and CBOs several times each week. Half the questions and problems that came up were caused by people not knowing what to do in a particular situation, and getting frustrated and then spiraling toward the “blame game.” In contrast, she describes

today's environment as one where people know each other and the practices and appropriate channels to address problems:

They start by talking to the Site Coordinator, then the CBO Supervisor, then the CARES Administrator, etc. A chain of command [is in place] before it goes to the District. And usually, people just need to be heard.

Accordingly, it's critical that the central LEA afterschool department build some longevity and continuity, even if the school site level has more staff attrition. There is a history for this central office and it is important that they are not always reinventing and rewriting. If the best leaders cannot document their battles and learnings, then new staff will continually scramble to recreate what has already been done. "When you reach a point where it can run without specific people, then you know the system is strong. It's not dependent on the specific person, it's a structure with legs," the Development Director asserts.

Another benefit of longevity has been the bandwidth and space to implement best practices. The Development Director recalls hearing about San Francisco's success with CBO partnerships, both in quantity and quality. She remembers her colleagues saying "What? How can they say it's so easy? Oh, we are different. That works in San Francisco because they are a city and county together, because they have people with longevity, because there are so many CBOs, etc..." In her mind, the tragedy of all this was that afterschool colleagues were spending so much time and energy "differentiating themselves and talking about how it only works for *them*," rather than trying to learn about how the models or pieces of it might apply to *us*. "But when you begin to have infrastructure and longevity and stability, you can begin to see how it might work. Rather than just throwing your hands up and saying, 'Well, that doesn't work for us ...' you can start to build similar successful pieces."

The CCC A4A Collaboration provides a great forum for sharing practices and learning. Mt. Diablo CARES has begun to serve as a "mentor" to other LEAs to show how their practices might apply. Mt. Diablo CARES has been identified as a California Department of Education Demonstration site and Exemplary Healthy Behavior Learning Center. Through the After School 4 All network, they are working with the Antioch School District to see how they might apply the nutrition/physical education pieces and other components.

Ultimately, one of the big lessons is about the culture: it's not just a job—with the longevity we have with people in the afterschool department and field—it's a passion. You don't HAVE to have longevity, there's the reality of staff turnovers, of new people coming in. But everybody here understands the culture of this work. And now, it's a self-perpetuating culture. It goes beyond the individual and is part of the system and work now.

In a similar vein, this QASPP Guidebook aims to help LEAs and CBOs learn from one another, rather than distinguishing; to foster the culture of collaboration and the passion and long-term commitment needed to build quality afterschool programs for all.

The *WINGS* (Winners Growing Strong) afterschool program in National City is operated under a unique shared management arrangement between the National City Public Library and the National School District. National City is a small suburban community South of San Diego and only 10 miles north of the border with Mexico. Established in 1871, National School District is one of the oldest school districts in San Diego County.

The majority of students in the National City School District are Hispanic (80%), with a smaller yet significant ethnic group Filipino (12%), and 2.8% African American, 2.9% White and 2.1% other. The district has ten K-6th grade elementary schools with an average of 670 students each for a total of around 5,795 students all of whom (100%) come from low-income families. More than half, 62.1%, are still learning English (2005-06 District Accountability Report (<http://nsd.us/district/index.php>)).

National School District is part of the larger consortium of school districts that participate in the San Diego County Office of Education’s (SDCOE) ASES program, with the county serving as the fiscal agent and managing the state and federal afterschool grants. Within this countywide partnership model, the SDCOE not only serves as the LEA receiving funds—taking an indirect of 2% of the afterschool grants allocated to schools in the county—but also provides technical assistance and training to programs operating within participating school districts. A unit at the SDCOE works to oversee compliance with ASES legislation and track attendance to make sure attendance goals are being met. SDCOE also conducts the program evaluations and required reporting to the state and federal government (<http://www.sdcoe.net/ssp/rtac>).

Under this partnership model County staff make observational visits, give feedback to programs and assist with Categorical Program Monitoring (CPM), supporting programs where needed. “They [County staff] do fulfill their technical support role very well,” remarks the National School District’s Extended Learning Opportunities Coordinator charged with coordinating the afterschool grants and all contracted service providers in his NSD. Independent of the county, each school district has the option (if they desire) to contract the service providers they choose to operate the ASES program at their school sites. The District Coordinator speaks positively with regard to the role the SDCOE plays in supporting the ASES grantees in the county: “They are on call to clarify and answer questions for staff development, and meet with us when we need their guidance. I attend monthly meetings with them and the other districts in San Diego County. We are very well supported by the County Office.”

FEATURED TOOLS & SAMPLES

*Parent Agreement Form
(English & Spanish)*

*WINGs Parent FAQ
(English & Spanish)*

*Primary Pen Pal Project
(Primary & Intermediate)*

*Rational for Project-Based Activities &
Sample Curriculum*

Bringing the Specialized Resources of the City Library to Afterschool

In the case of National School District, for three years the local YMCA was the primary provider for the afterschool programs in the District. At that time the National City Public Library (NCPL) only provided the literacy component of the afterschool program. Since 2003 the Library became the primary provider managing the programming offered at ten elementary school sites in close collaboration with the District, in what they call a “shared management” approach with distinct roles carried out by each partner. The Coordinator of Extended Learning Opportunities within the Educational Services Department of the National School District manages the ASES funds received from the county, working in close partnership with the National City Public Library. The District administrator also coordinates at least ten other contracted community agencies.

Although other provider agencies are involved in the WINGS program, the Library is responsible for overseeing the other contracted providers’ provision of enrichment programming at the site level. In addition, the NCPL is responsible for delivering the academic enrichment and homework support components, including Homework Help, and standards based activities in Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Wellness. Other district contracted community agencies—under the NCPL coordination at each site—offer specialized recreational enrichment activities such as Art, Dance, Drama, Golf, Karate, Instrumental Music, and Seasonal Sports, including culturally relevant activities such as Mariachis (traditional Mexican band), *Ballet Folklórico* (Mexican folk dance) and Pasacat Dance (Filipino folk dance) and golf lessons provided by the San Diego Inner City Junior Golf Foundation.

The library staff are city employees, but they are the ones who facilitate the WINGS program at each of the district’s 10 elementary school sites. They sign students in and out of the program daily, give them their snacks and make sure they are where they are supposed to be during the afterschool program. Library administrators, or so-called “offsite management,” directly communicate with the schools, take care of discipline issues, and communicate with parents. The Library’s Program Director explains, “We’re a really tight collaborative when you realize that all of the contractors and the city staff and the District Coordinator, all work together to make everything run smoothly.” From his perspective, the District Coordinator adds:

Scheduling coordination how all these contracts come into play and meld with rest of the week’s program and how they align with the school day principal and staff goals, superintendent and board policies is all pretty complex [...] It started off not so complex but it has evolved, as the needs of the community have demanded here. The implication about the importance of the partnership looms pretty large here. It couldn’t happen without that kind of collaboration and partnership with the city. [...] It’s a monster but it’s a good monster.

All the partners meet regularly and work collaboratively in creating a comprehensive ASES program, as the Coordinator explains:

What we want to achieve is a strong balance of academics and recreation. The Library staff does an excellent job of doing academic things and following through with what happens in the regular school day academically, working with principals and working with staff to make that seamless program out there. The other agencies are ones [chosen] through community input, through surveys, through soliciting from...our kids in particular, the kinds of things that resonate with them, things that will help them, that will bring them into the program and create some good memories for them as they connect with the regular school day. It's an intentional balance that we try to achieve with all our partners

The District's Coordinator of Extended Learning Opportunities further describes the unique nature of the partnership between the District and the NCPL:

Something that we discovered over the years that has been very beneficial, in this very unique partnership, with the Library and the City [National City], and the School District, is that we have been able to discover how to work to our strengths and it kind of evolved uniquely that way over the years [...]. The Library has developed curriculum aligned with the District's vision and goals for literacy, math, science, and wellness education. They have become really good at delivering those components of our program for the academic side of things.

The partners attribute the viability of their partnership to several factors. To begin with, there is a long history of successful administration of state and federally funded afterschool programs in the county; as such, the National City collaborative was able to learn from the success of others in building their own unique program model. The District Coordinator explains how they were inspired by another program to outreach to the library:

We visited one just south of us in Chula Vista where the Chula Vista Public Library runs several of their programs as well...we really liked their model because they were providing the academic piece that was kind of missing before [for us] and it aligned much more closely with their District goals. In our District, a very large issue for our students is the acquisition of English. The English language learner population is very dominant here so our major goal that overrides all [the rest] is the acquisition of English. We saw that being addressed in a more direct way there and we wanted that model for ourselves as well.

Because the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, and the Director of the National City Public Library visited the program in Chula Vista, they were able to envision the possibility of creating a similar partnership in their own community. Subsequently, the National School District contracted the National City Public Library as one of their afterschool provider agencies. The District Coordinator further elaborates, "We brought that idea back and have developed something unique over the years. It's not a cookie cutter approach, or a copy of what we saw in Chula Vista but (an acknowledgment of) the notion of the Public Library, the literacy folks, the folks that know about literacy (taking charge of addressing the literacy needs of our

community).” Initially, during the first three years, with the YMCA as the primary CBO, the NCPL developed a literacy component for the afterschool program. But with time, the NCPL proved to have the expertise and leadership required to take on the responsibility of managing the afterschool program at the school sites for the National School District.

The School Board leadership was instrumental in the adoption of this model. The city librarian being a member of the School Board greatly facilitated the turnover of the day-to-day operation of the Program to the NCPL. The City Librarian was very aware of the programs that were running at the library and knew the desires of the school district intimately and therefore played a central role in orchestrating and solidifying the partnership. From these connections, the WINGS After School Program was established for students in grades Kinder through 6th. As stated in the District’s website:

The WINGS program provides a safe place for students to experience academic enrichment, homework help, and recreational activities during the hours when most parents work.

One of the district’s goals is to “create a solid foundation in reading, writing, and problem-solving.” To help meet that goal, the library developed a curriculum based on the grade level standards in California and aligned it with what goes on in the regular school day. The WINGS Program Administrator has fifteen years of experience in the library’s Literacy Services Department managing a number of successful projects including running a family literacy program, supervising adult tutors and learners, creating and delivering tutor trainings. The expertise of the afterschool program administrator at the library matched the district’s need to provide intentional literacy support to their students with a particular focus on English language development. To this end, the District’s Extended Learning Opportunities Coordinator recognizes the benefit of partnering with the Library:

The library is able to train coaches to effectively deliver the literacy component, [...] to do worthwhile activities that expand on vocabulary at students’ grade level or that directly address what their teacher is doing in the classroom. It is a collaboration that we wouldn’t trade for all the tea in China.

—District Program Coordinator

The acceleration of English Language Acquisition is a District goal that goes along with all the others, so one of our stipulations is that everything is done in English. For children that only speak Spanish and need clarification, we have staff to provide that. But exhibits, performances and presentations are all in English so that their language can develop in an accelerated way. So we’ve met some District goals that way. [With regard to] literacy, the ASP has been able to provide ‘vocabulary development in a literature based way. The library is able to train coaches to effectively deliver the literacy component, we use the vocabulary from teachers in the regular school day and the coaches are able to do

worthwhile activities that expand on vocabulary at their grade level or that directly address what their teacher is doing in the classroom, so that is a collaboration that we wouldn't trade for all the tea in China.

Collaborative and Responsive Program Management

The ability and willingness to immediately respond to ongoing issues as they arise is key to the National City afterschool partnership success. The library's WINGS Administrator explains how a dynamic, flexible and open communication policy keeps the partnership strong:

We communicate daily, all the time. We talk on the phone, we email, and we drop by each other's office, a lot of informal communication. We also have a lot of formal communications with planned meetings with agendas that we have to accomplish, but I am going to say that honestly, informal daily communication is what takes care of almost everything. If he [the District Program Coordinator] needs something, he calls and we deal with it. If we have a question, we call, and he deals with it immediately. So if we have a teacher complaining to [the District] about our staff, then I'll work with our staff to do better in the classroom. It's that type of everyday communicating that makes the partnership work. We respond to everything almost immediately. We have that immediate response to parent issues, to teacher issues, to student discipline issues.

It's important to understand that it doesn't happen overnight. [...] It's been a long road of establishing the trust and the interpersonal working relationships with regular school day staff that this partnership has been able to nurture.

—District Program Coordinator

As an example, the Library's program administrator further points out how the District and library work closely to address specific needs of students: "We have a lot of students with IEPs (Individual Educational Plan), and we have access to that information because a District representative will go to the IEP meeting and let us know what we have to do to support that particular student. It happens every single day; it's not like this scheduled planned thing, it's living and breathing the program."

To maintain the broader collaborative working in the same vein, regular formal meetings are held every couple of months with all of the District's contracted provider agencies in attendance. In addition, fulltime mentor coaches attend staff meetings, parent meetings, and school site council meetings. The mentor coaches work directly with all who are involved with the WINGS afterschool program.

Still, the WINGS partnership has had its share of challenges in coordinating the efforts of all stakeholders and overcoming some common conflicts between institutional cultures, sharing responsibilities and defining roles in implementing the afterschool program. The District Coordinator elaborates on how they have been able to successfully deal with some of these issues:

It's important to understand that it doesn't happen overnight. When we first started five years ago, with the territorial issues that teachers have—universal to

every afterschool program—you start using people’s classrooms and it’s like its sacred ground. Overcoming the facilities issues has been one that we really have gotten a handle on because of the working relationships that we have been able to establish over the years with teachers and principals. It’s been a long road (towards) getting trust, and (the) interpersonal working relationships with regular school day staff that this partnership has been able to nurture. It is important to recognize (trust) as a way to disarm a myriad of problems.

Ongoing communication, both formal and informal, amongst the program staff and management and across all stakeholders is central to WINGS’ success. The District Program Coordinator makes presentations at School Board and District meetings with principals and the staff about the program to keep the school community informed. For its part, the Library makes presentations at Neighborhood Council meetings to inform National City’s broader community about the activities of the afterschool program.

Team meetings of site library staff occur weekly. Lead Coaches (the library employees who work as leads at each of the ten program sites) meet monthly with the library’s WINGS Administrator and Mentor Coaches. The District leads a *Professional Learning Community*, bringing together the Administrator, Mentor Coaches (library personnel paid out of grant funds) and the District Program Coordinator once a month. The collaborative, including the District, Library and all other partners, is able to accomplish a great deal through such formal meetings; however, the District Coordinator emphasizes that this structure more importantly allows for the development relationships that facilitate the kinds of informal conversations that help maintain the smooth and effective operation of the afterschool program. The District Coordinator further emphasizes the shared responsibility all have for the program:

The Library personnel bring everything under the umbrella of the WINGS Afterschool Program. Nobody operates in a vacuum...the whole idea of “a village raising a child” is very big here. Nobody is a lone ranger on their own. We’re all a part of this family collaborative that comes together to provide service for our community.

An Engaging Project-Based Curriculum

One of the ways that the Library has been able to contribute to the quality of the WINGS program is through its interactive and project-oriented approach to the curriculum. For example, the Library organizes Science Fairs, Spelling Bees, Math Olympiads, and a *Jump Rope for Heart* wellness nutrition and health program [see Appendix B for *Rational for Project Based Activities*; primary and intermediate *Pen Pal* curriculum samples].

Striking that balance between maintaining an intentional academic focus and providing diverse engaging enrichment activities is often a challenge for many CBOs, but is one of the strengths of the WINGS program. The Library’s Program Director expands upon the “disguised learning” philosophy and approach embraced by the collaborative:

We're driven by these projects, and it works really well because students have a goal and they're learning with a purpose. We actually have an event every single month, celebrations that include performances on stage with an audience. [...] One of the things that we need to make clear is that the curriculum is fun! It's games, it's hands on, it's multi-functional, it's active, it's fun and it doesn't feel like school [...] The kids are having full body multi-sensory fun at the same time they're learning things. We disguise learning, so they don't really even know that they're learning. They're all looking forward to this big grand finale and they don't realize all the things they're learning along the way.

The District and Library leadership are on the same page when it comes to the appropriate curriculum approach for the afterschool program. The Library's Program Director has a background working with students with learning disabilities and understands the value of creating learning experiences for students with diverse learning styles and needs, and the effectiveness of "getting the whole body involved" to engage young children. From the perspective of the District's Program Coordinators the visual arts are particularly valuable for afterschool:

We've discovered that there is something about the visual performing arts where kids get to get up and perform, or display a project that they have completed and get a pat on the back from the large audiences of parents, teachers and principals that come to these afterschool events. We recognize that this creates mileage that lasts a long time to make kids want to come to school, and that enhances learning.

The interactive curriculum the Library implements is designed for everyday afterschool program staff. The Program Director asserts, "We're no different from anyone else; these are things that anyone can do if they take it to heart and they coordinate and they try to put it together. We haven't developed anything that is not universal and we hope other people can take [our experience] and run with it."

Fiscal and Infrastructure Issues

Given National City's demographic profile as one of the poorest socio-economic cities in the county, according to the District Coordinator, the Superintendent and Board have determined to maximize their funding to expand the program as much as possible in order that they not leave any child behind. However this caused some problems as he explains,

Well, in all good conscience the program expanded and expanded and expanded beyond the infrastructure that was originally set up to run the program, placing a pretty big strain on National City Public Library to meet the demands, and also on the community and the District that were placing [those demands]. The growing pains certainly produced an amount of stress and strain, although nothing that could not be overcome. So what had to happen politically in our District is that we had to take the Library's contract to the School Board and justify increasing our ASES

allocation to them in order to be able to build the infrastructure to actually support the program.

The addition of Mentor Coaches has had a positive effect on the Library's ability to grow its capacity to match the program's expansion. These coaches are now available to work full time to connect with principals, school staff and to attend parent meetings. The District Coordinator points out, "We didn't have that ability until this year. It took growing pains, and blood, sweat and tears on the part of the National City Public Library staff to actually operate under the weight of a very big and growing program."

Another challenge resulting from the program's rapid expansion over the past five years has been related to cash flow problems. The Program Coordinator elaborates

We've been running a program in arrears, not receiving the promised allocation until nearly a year later. And especially now with all of the budget concerns and the State not having a budget, just recently we were \$850,000 dollars [in the red]. But just recently, at the end of January, CDE came through with the promised allocation that brought us up to snuff and even further. By contract, they are supposed to pay the District 65% of the allocation by the middle of the year, but they were kind of late on that, and so the District has had to run the program with a "general fund" [structured] to be paid back. The cash flow thing kind of looms hard. The Finance Director would come down to me and let me know on a daily basis what kind of a problem it was causing. And then we finally got the next 25%, which really helped us a lot, and then in the end...if everything goes well we'll get the final 10%. But until we got that 65% this year I would be remiss in not saying that it hurt us and caused a good deal of concern in the business end of the District.

This specific situation exemplifies that despite the advances achieved with the Proposition 49 reforms, some challenges remain for both districts and CBOs to operate programs when funds are not readily and consistently available. Despite these fiscal challenges, the WINGS collaborative continues to invest in this unique partnership, incorporating a diverse array of community resources in the delivery of quality enrichment and literacy rich activities for the high need population served

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APPENDIX A

PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS CHART (Database Prototype with Sample Content from Case Studies)

MAJOR PROBLEM CATEGORY	Quick Description of Problem	Details of Problem (Descriptions, Examples)	SOLUTIONS	CBO/LEA Partnership TYPE & Contact Information [Case Study Participants]
EVALUATION & COMPLIANCE	Releasing Confidential Data to Non-School Staff (CBO)	CBO often in charge of evaluation and reporting. Requires access to the district database How do CBOs and LEAs work collaboratively to carry out program evaluation activities, share information and meet reporting requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation team meetings of LEA and CBO representatives with contracted evaluator conducted to determine program outcome measures in accordance with program goal and to identify data needs and collection procedures. Data is shared back to all collaborative partners and used for program improvement. ▪ District runs reports for the Boys and Girls Club semi-annually to determine outcomes for students participating in the afterschool program, and to ensure that the program is meeting its goals. The use of a database <i>DATA DIRECTOR</i> allows them to compare CST or benchmark growth between ASES and non-ASES students. Specialized District staff support BGCGG staff data analysis and in determining the best way to present the information to different stakeholders. ▪ After experiencing the Categorical Program Monitoring (CPM) process, Bay Area ASAS was able to get partner agencies and school districts to become more responsive to meeting the ASES program requirements. The CPM process helped the District “get up to speed” with the language of the ASES program, facilitating the lead agency’s oversight of other CBO partners by helping to enforce their adherence to the legislative requirements of the program. ASAS created an <i>Attendance Reporting Policy</i> and instituted regular internal audits. 	<p>Anaheim City School District & Anaheim YMCA—TYPE I & II</p> <p>Garden Grove Unified School District & Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove—TYPE I & II</p> <p>Bay Area After-School All-Stars & Multiple Partners—TYPE II</p>

FINANCE	Administrative Overhead for CBOs	With the 5% overhead cap and 15% administrative costs cap, the public grant has very little left to compensate CBOs for their overhead. For example, the ASES grant goes through the district, which takes 10-15% for its costs. CBO is forced to carry costs of program start-up even though the District has already received the funding. How can CBOs secure enough of the grant funds cover costs for program start up and ongoing administration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognizing that CBOs need to cover program administrative and start-up costs, some LEAs choose to retain a maximum of 5% or less for their indirect costs related to the grant, as is the case of the Anaheim City School District; the YMCA receives 95% of the ASES grant funds for the Anaheim Achieves program. ▪ Sierra Sands USD provides the Southern Sierra Boys & Girls Club a substantial advance through an MOU which they begin to pay back after two months from program start-up—over a 10 month period. The District retains a minimal indirect “management fee” and allows the CBO to designate part of their allocated funds to program management (i.e. sharing the allowed 5% indirect and 15% admin cost cap). ▪ CBOs are integrated into budget decision-making; the district (LEA) works with each school and CBO for decisions on the ASES grant funds. 	<p>Anaheim City School District & Anaheim YMCA —TYPE I & II</p> <p>Sierra Sands Unified School District & Southern Sierra Boys and Girls Club—TYPE III</p> <p>Mt. Diablo School District & Multiple Partners—TYPE III</p>
HUMAN RESOURCES & STAFFING	Issues of Staff Hiring and Supervision	Staff recruitment, hiring, training and supervision can become complex within the context of an LEA /CBO afterschool partnership. Lack of clarity can occur regarding who has say in hiring the site director or teacher liaison, for example, and to whom does that staff person answer; the school principal or agency’s program manger?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three ICES Regional Coordinators, charged with overseeing sites, work collaboratively with the District Program Supervisors who have a similar charge. ICES and District supervisors meet regularly and join the Site Directors at monthly meeting with principals at sites. This ensures every one is on the same page regarding personnel policies and any emerging supervision issues. ▪ Teachers, contracted by the YMCA, work as Program Liaisons and receive a stipend, but remain supervised by the school principal. When a teacher resigns, the principal helps identify a teacher to fill the position. The principal has direct oversight of the PL at each school site, helping to create a sense of teamwork among the school administrators, teachers and ASP directors. When necessary the principal intervenes on behalf of the YMCA to handle any personnel issue with the PL. 	<p>Montebello Unified School District & International Center for Education and Sports (ICES)—TYPE II</p> <p>Anaheim City School District & Anaheim YMCA—TYPE I & II</p>

<p>FACILITIES</p>	<p>Access to Classrooms and Facilities Use</p>	<p>A common problem for CBOs is the use of classroom space (usually allocated and utilized by teachers during the after school hours), and the use of official keys to open rooms (usually authorized to school staff only). How can CBOs work with their school site to reach a working relationship with regard to facilities that respects the expectations and needs of both the school and after school program staff and students?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A teacher at each site in Garvey School District works as a <i>Teacher Liaison</i> to mitigate facilities issues for the ASP (among other roles). The partner CBO, Woodcraft Rangers, shares resources with the school site: e.g. housing Technology Carts in the classroom of a “champion” teacher (who collaborates with the afterschool program) for students to use during the school day. Woodcraft’s Activity Coordinator for Technology and Garvey School District’s technology staff work cooperatively on equipment maintenance, operation, and training. ▪ Lucia Mar School District assigns a School Site Coordinator (usually a teacher) to work in collaboration with the CBO Partner Site Coordinator. If issues arise with the ASP, such as facilities use, a School SC works in collaboration with the CBO Site Coordinator and provider agency staff to come to a feasible solution for everyone. ▪ Demystifying the Districts’ expectations and bringing the afterschool staff into a more informed and empowered position to handle matters concerning the use of the school campus, maintenance staff of the Garden Grove Unified School District provide training for CBO staff on how to maintain the facilities, and when to call for maintenance support. ▪ The school site principal is key to alignment and cooperation between teachers and afterschool staff. When the principal sets the tone that the afterschool program is “our” program for “our” kids, then problems are usually resolved. The principal can set up equitable systems such as “rotating classrooms by quarters” or “using the classrooms that have most students enrolled in the program and working on that teacher’s assigned homework.” When a principal is on-board, even the perennial problem of space can be resolved. 	<p>Woodcraft Rangers & Garvey School District —TYPE II</p> <p>Lucia Mar School District & Multiple Partners—TYPE III</p> <p>Garden Grove Unified School District & Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove—TYPE I & II</p> <p>CARES, Mt. Diablo Unified School District with Bay Area Community Resources & Multiple Partners—TYPE III</p>
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<p>CURRICULUM & CONTENT</p>	<p>Creating Coherent Alignment with School Day</p>	<p>CBOs are charged with aligning their curriculum to the academic program at the school site but often staff insufficient experience to do this. How can CBOs and District work collaboratively to ensure coherence between the School Day and ASP academic goals and curriculum?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Curriculum Specialist assigned to provided support and expertise to ASP staff, guiding them in planning academically aligned curriculum, help insure coherence between the school day and ASP with out making unrealistic demands of CBO staff and compromising the youth development and enrichment focus of the after school program. ▪ District Specialist assigned to support teachers working as “Teacher Liaisons,” whose job is to facilitate the connection between the school day and ASP. Teacher Liaisons, for example, train ASP staff in math strategies taught during school day instruction. ▪ Credentialed instructional staff assigned as <i>Teacher Liaisons</i> dedicate fives hours a week to linking the ASP to the day program, coordinating facilities and equipment needed by the ASP, and providing general assistance to students and staff during the homework hour. ASP Staff participate in <i>joint trainings</i> with regular school instructional staff that are relevant to the work they do in the afterschool program. ▪ Teachers work in ASP leading academic tutoring and enrichment classes; CBO Partner Agencies focus on providing recreation and other enrichment activities. A School Site Coordinator [usually a teacher] works closely with the CBO Site Coordinator to coordinate the ASP to met schools’ academic goals for students. ▪ The National City Library—with experience developing literacy curriculum—works in partnership with the school district to develop a curriculum aligned with the District’s goals providing students with a solid foundation in reading, writing, and problem-solving. The library develops ASP curriculum based on the grade level standards in California and aligned with what goes on in 	<p>Montebello Unified School District & International Center for Education and Sports (ICES)—TYPE II</p> <p>Garden Grove Unified School District & Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove—TYPE I & II</p> <p>Garvey School District & Woodcraft Rangers—TYPE II</p> <p>Lucia Mar School District & Multiple Partners—TYPE III</p> <p>National City School District & National City Library—TYPE II</p>
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			<p>the regular school day in literacy, math, and science and wellness education. The Library trains ASP coaches to effectively deliver the academic and literacy components of the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mt. Diablo CARES employs an Academic Liaison—a credentialed teacher to work on academic alignment, coordinating homework support, intervention and tutoring, and performing direct teaching to high-needs students. A District Administrator is in charge of ASES, 21st CCLC, and the SES programs, eliminating the need to go through multiple departments and personnel. The SES federal program allows CARES to incorporate academic strategies, such as targeted tutoring assistance for SES eligible students, providing a more comprehensive afterschool program. Most parents choose CARES, among state approved providers, because it offers SES services at the school site, and many of their children are already enrolled in the CARES afterschool program. ▪ Local site-based program management allows teachers and ASP staff to identify components in the school day that can be extended into the ASP through a variety of project-based learning activities. This alignment extends to staff development with district and CBO staff having access to trainings provided by either partner. This cross training allows teachers and afterschool staff to share ideas and work collaboratively to support the regular day and extend learning to afternoon, promoting seamless programming. 	<p>Mt. Diablo CARES, Mt. Diablo Unified School District with Bay Area Community Resources and Multiple Partners—TYPE III</p> <p>Sierra Sands Unified School District & Southern Sierra Boys and Girls Club—TYPE III</p>
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<p>COMMUNITIES & FAMILIES</p>	<p>Bridging the Gap between Schools, Communities and Families</p>	<p>Schools—particularly sites located in immigrant and low SES communities—face a number of challenges getting parents involved and connecting to limited community resources. How can afterschool programs create opportunities for parent involvement and broaden the community connections for schools?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Bay Area AS Comprehensive Counseling Program works to ensure students take full advantage of a range of educational opportunities. The counselor works with the school community to engage parents and families, to increase family involvement and support for their child’s educational attainment. The counselor provides individual academic counseling to assist with motivation and to develop students’ study and life skills (e.g. organization, time management, problem solving, communication). The program includes academic-orientated summer camp and field trip activities. ▪ The Montebello USD partner agency, ICES, offers unique opportunities for parent involvement through their highly professional sports programming on Saturdays when parents are available. ICES Site Directors are encouraged to proactively work to identify supplementary sources to complement the ASES program and expand opportunities for participating youth (such as access to professional sports events and a Hawaii Leadership Academy). Long standing partnerships with local Institutions of Higher Education allow ICES to recruit local college students as mentors and to work as Lead Coaches, further strengthening ties to the community. ▪ Family Literacy Night brings parents on to the school site with WR and the District sharing resources to implement the program. WR further builds relationships with local businesses, and reciprocally, the District introduces WR to potential private funders leading to the agency securing additional funds for the afterschool program while creating a more solid sustainability strategy. 	<p>Bay Area After-School All-Stars & Multiple Partners—TYPE II</p> <p>International Center for Education and Sports (ICES) & Montebello USD – TYPE II</p> <p>Garvey USD & Woodcraft Rangers—TYPE II</p>
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APPENDIX B

LIST OF PARTNERSHIP TOOLS & SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

Partnership resources, provided by the QASPP Case Study participants, available online for downloading at:

www.afterschoolleague.org

Type of Resource	Source
<i>Partnership Tools—Collaborative Models, Principles and Guidelines</i>	
1. Collaborative Circle [Graphic]	Anaheim Achieves, YMCA & ACSD
2. Organizational Chart	Anaheim Achieves, YMCA & ACSD
3. Matching Support Activities for collaborative Partners	SSBGC & Sierra Sands USD
4. Building Partnerships, PowerPoint Presentation	SSBGC & Sierra Sands USD
5. Oakland After School Strategic Master Plan	Oakland Success, OUSD & OCASA
6. Teacher Liaison Meeting Agenda	WR & Garvey School District
7. Building Reform Level Partnerships	San Diego USD
<i>Sample CBO/LEA Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)</i>	
1. MOU with Provider agency—Sierra Sands Unified School District	
2. MOU Exhibit A, Program Requirements—Sierra Sands Unified School District	
3. MOU, at Site Level—Lucia Mar School District	
4. Requirements for LEA MOU—Bay Area ASAS	
<i>Assessment—Tools and Sample Reports</i>	
1. Principal Feedback Form, Initial	Bay Area, ASAS
2. Principal Feedback Form, Year-end	Bay Area, ASAS
3. Anaheim Achieves Needs Assessment Summary	Anaheim Achieves, YMCA & ACSD
4. Program Action Plan (Goals, Outcomes, Measures)	Anaheim Achieves, YMCA & ACSD
5. Needs Assessment Survey	WR & Garvey USD
6. Collaborative Survey	WR & Garvey USD
7. After School Program Findings, Presentation to the Board	WR & Garvey USD
8. WFIT Program Results September 2009	WFIT & LAUSD
<i>Program Management & Communications</i>	
1. ASES Program Plan	SSBGC & Sierra Sands USD
2. Attendance Reporting Policy	Bay Area ASAS
3. “Blended” Emergency Form	BGCGG & Garden Grove USD
4. ASES Student Referral Guidelines	BGCGG & Garden Grove USD
5. Student Enrollment Form	Oakland USD
6. Mt. Diablo CARES Enrollment Form (English/Spanish)	CARES, MDUSD & BACR
7. Parent Agreement Form (English/Spanish)	WINGS, National City SD & Library
8. Parent Program FAQ (English/Spanish)	WINGS, National City SD & Library
9. Anaheim Achieves Fact Sheet	Anaheim Achieves, YMCA & ACSD
10. ICES Times Newsletter	ICES & Montebello USD
11. Annual Winter Tournament and Festival	ICES & Montebello USD
12. Memo to Superintendents	LACOE & Region 11 Grantees

Staff Development

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| 1. Summer Training Program | BGCGG & Garden Grove USD |
| 2. Staff Training & Events Schedule | Anaheim Achieves, YMCA & ACSD |
| 3. ASES Staff Training Schedule | SSBGC & Sierra Sands USD |
| 4. Recreation Leader Training Agenda | Bright Futures, Lucia Mar SD |
| 5. Site Visit Worksheet & Communication Form | Bright Futures, Lucia Mar SD |

Curriculum & Program Materials

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| 1. Sample Program Schedule | SSUSD & Sierra Sands USD |
| 2. Sample Program Schedule; Enrichment Courses | Bright Futures, Lucia Mar SD |
| 3. Sample Program Schedule (Spanish) | Bright Futures, Lucia Mar SD |
| 4. Primary Pen Pal Project (Primary) | WINGS, National City SD & Library |
| 5. Primary Pen Pal Project (Intermediate) | WINGS, National City SD & Library |
| 6. Rational for Project Based Activities | WINGS, National City SD & Library |
| 7. Hawaii Leadership Academy | ICES & Montebello USD |
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APPENDIX C

LITERATURE REVIEW AND LIST OF ONLINE RESOURCES

Since the launching of the Federal 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative in 1998, federal and state governmental agencies, often in partnership with private entities (e.g. *The Charles Stuart Mott Foundation* nationally and *The David and Lucile Packard Foundation* in California) have sought to promote alliances between youth-serving community-based organizations (CBOs), K-12 public education and other public agencies in the creation of partnerships concerned with the provision of afterschool programs. Several key publications and online resources have emerged at both the state and national levels that focus on the principles of effective afterschool partnerships and offer guidance to those seeking to establish new collaborative relationships across institutional and organizational boundaries. Existing resources relevant to California afterschool programs are briefly outlined here and followed by a list of titles and URLs where the referenced documents and other resources can be downloaded.

The white paper, *A View from the Field: Helping Community Organizations Meet Capacity Challenges* (Friedman, 2001; commissioned by the Wallace Foundation), elucidates the problems faced by CBOs working in partnership with governmental agencies, including school districts and cities, and offers some recommendations for addressing these. Organizational challenges that “inhibit providers from delivering high quality after-school programs” include:

- Difficulty developing and retaining strong frontline staff, site coordinators and middle managers
- Struggle to build meaningful working partnerships with host principals and schools and to communicate to educators the benefits of afterschool programs
- Lack of capacity to deliver structured and rigorous content across a broad range of disciplines (i.e., management and operation responsibilities take precedence over quality of curriculum)
- Problems with fiscal management and governance; era of accountability (citing the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002)

The report provides the following recommendations for partnerships seeking to address these challenges:

- Pursue a broad-based, Multi-pronged strategy to strengthen the skills and professionalism of the afterschool workforce, developing training prototypes and college opportunities for staff; and establish both mandates and incentives for CBOs to access more training
- Educate the educators-leaders of schools and school systems about the value of afterschool programs operated by CBOs and how they benefit students, and teach these leaders how to build strong working partnerships with CBOs

- Develop and disseminate program content and curricula, and hold CBOs accountable for training staff to deliver strong content
- Change expectations among private funders and advocate with government agencies in order to allow CBOs and intermediaries to use a greater portion of their funds to support, train and supervise administrative staff

The National Youth Development Information Center, A Project of the National Collaborative for Youth (2004) features CBO and LEA State Education Agency Toolkits including a number of valuable informational pieces, strategies and tools for partnership building. On the information center website, one can download a series of brief documents featuring **“What the research tells us about the importance of partnerships”** relating to the following key topics:

- Youth Deserve High Quality After School Programming
- Partnerships Between Schools and Community-Based Organizations are Crucial to High Quality After School Programming for All Youth
- Partnerships Between CBOs and Schools Help Youth Meet Educational Goals by Supporting the Development of Non-Academic Competencies that In Turn Support Academic Engagement and Achievement
- Community-Based Organizations Help Youth Meet Educational Goals
- National Assembly Findings: School/Community Collaborations Matrix

In addition, the NYDIC site offers strategies for creating and sustaining successful partnerships including the following checklists and tools:

Strategies for Success:

- Principles of Effective Partnerships
- Strategies for Success: Do Your Homework! Become an Expert
- Strategies for Success: Build a Model
- Strategies for Success: Involve CBOs from the Start (SEAs)
- Strategies for Success: Develop the Proposal
- Strategies for Success: Create Solutions Together
- Strategies for Success: Communicate
- Strategies for Success: Implement the Partnership
- Strategies for Success: Major Sources of Afterschool Funding

Checklists

- Principles of Effective Partnership Checklist
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Responsibility Checklist
- Risk Management Checklist

To download the resources listed above refer to: <http://www.nydic.org/nydic/toolkits/index.htm>

From the LEA perspective, the National School Board Association's (NSBA) Extended-Day Learning Opportunities Program, with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, published *Building and Sustaining After-School Programs: Successful Practices in School Board Leadership* (2005). This NSBA publication presents "ways that school boards can promote student success and community engagement by supporting extended learning opportunities." The report features "examples of policies and partnerships from eight districts whose boards are providing strategic and innovative leadership for after-school programs, and lays out a set of action steps that are easy to follow and readily align with district priorities." Sample school board policies and memoranda of understanding (MOU) are among some of the resources included in the report.

https://secure.nsba.org/pubs/item_info.cfm?who=pub&ID=721

The NSBA has also launched an Extended-Day Learning Opportunities (EDLO) Online Resource Center which provides information for school boards on "What is extended day?" and "What Boards can do" to support afterschool program, with additional links to reports, studies and guides from various sources.

<http://www.nsba.org/MainMenu/ResourceCenter/EDLO.aspx>

Similarly, the National Association of Elementary School Principals published *Leading After-School Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* (2006). The book aims to help principals understand the value of afterschool programs and to "rethink the connection between learning within the school day and learning that occurs beyond the school day" (ix.). It outlines the principles of quality afterschool programs and expands on a set of six standards and related strategies to guide school administrators in their efforts to support the ongoing development of programs at their school site. These six standards include:

1. Expand the vision of learning to include high quality experiences during out-of-school time.
2. Act as a catalyst in the community to develop quality after school programs.
3. Collaborate with after school site directors to manage resources that support the full learning day.
4. Support linkages, connections and relationships between the school day and after school learning that ensure program content meets community, school and student needs.
5. Work with after school directors to evaluate after school programs to ensure they achieve defined outcomes.
6. Promote access to high quality after school programs for all children.

Recent publications from the Harvard Family Research Project, the National League of Cities, and the Bowne Foundation (2010) address a range of topics and issues related to afterschool program partnerships and offer valuable principles and guidelines based on the state of the art of the field. These reports and other online partnership resources are listed below.

LIST OF ONLINE PARTNERSHIP RESOURCES

- The Afterschool Investments Project (June 2004). ***Creating a Vision for Afterschool Partnerships***. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau. Washington DC: The Finance Project. <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/presources.html>
- Friedman, L. N. (March 2008). ***A View from the Field: Helping Community Organizations Meet Capacity Challenges***. A white paper commissioned by The Wallace Foundation. www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/
- Harvard Family Research Project (March 2010) ***Partnerships for Learning: Promising Practices in Integrating School and Out-of-School Time Program Supports***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. www.hfrp.org/publications-resources
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (2006). ***Leading After-School Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do***. Washington D.C.: Collaborative Communications Group. www.publicengagement.com
- National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (March 2010). ***Strengthening Partnerships and Building Public Will for Out-of-School Time Programs***. Washington D.C.: National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families. www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/
- National School Boards Association (2005). ***Building and Sustaining After-School Programs: Successful Practices in School Board Leadership***. Extended-Day Learning Opportunities. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association. <https://secure.nsba.org/pubs>
- National Youth Development Information Center (2004). ***Partnerships for Afterschool Success/Community Based Organizations***. Washington D.C.: NYDIC. www.nydic.org/nydic/toolkits/index.htm
- Relave, N. and Deich, S. (January 2007). ***A Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Youth Programs***. Washington DC: The Finance Project. www.financeproject.org
- Sabo Flores, K. (March 2010). ***A Dynamic Framework for Understanding the Complex Work of Quality Out-of-School-Time Programs***. New York, NY: The Robert Bowne Foundation. www.robertbownefoundation.org
- Weiss, H. B., and Little, P. M. D. (May 2008). ***Strengthening Out-of-School Time Nonprofits: The Role of Foundations in Building Organizational Capacity***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/

QASPP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PROTOCOL I: CBO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. DESCRIBING THE PARTNERSHIP

1. How long has your organization been involved in providing after school program services?
2. When did your organization first start working in partnership with an LEA to provide your services on a school site or at another location?
3. What district(s) are you currently partnering with?
4. How many after school sites do you currently service?
5. How would you characterize the nature of your relationship with the school district?
6. Do you manage the program for the district or do you only operate a component of the program? If so what kinds of services do you provide?

[See Appendix A, Typology of CBOs]

B. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PARTNERSHIP TROUBLESHOOTING

7. Is there a specific person or department in the district charged with working directly with you to ensure that the partnership is operating as agreed, and that is able to work with you to resolve issues as they arise?
8. How do you contribute to ensuring that the partnership functions? Who in your organization is charged with working directly with the district?
9. What specific situations have you faced in your partnership that required you to “think out of the box” and develop and create an alternative or completely new perspective and approach?
10. What issues do you continue to struggle with in the partnership? What do you believe is the root cause of this (these) issue(s)? How might the district and your organization work to resolve it?

C. COMMON HOT SPOTS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

After school partnerships require common areas of overlapping and shared decision-making that often raise challenges for CBOs, Schools, and School Districts. These areas involve critical components such as finances, resources, staffing, vision, and relationships.

Please review the list of topics and trigger questions below. Consider your own experiences with “hot spots” in these areas, and how they were resolved.

For further details, *Appendix B* provides samples of “hot spots” encountered by CBOs, Schools, and School Districts. This chart may help you to think about your own examples.

- I. FINANCE (Budgets, Fundraising, Revenues, Expenditures)
 - *How do we decide line-item changes in a blended budget (Schools with CDE funding; CBOs with outside funding)?*
 - *Do the controls of the school district accounting system present “cash flow” problems for CBOs that must wait for reimbursements?*

- II. HUMAN RESOURCES (Hiring, Firing, Professional Development, Training, Retention, Union Rules, School/Paraprofessional Staff, CBO Staff)
 - *Who selects the After School Site Coordinator?*
 - *Can she/he be a staff member of the CBO?*
 - *Or is she/he required to be a district certificated employee?*

- III. CURRICULUM (Vision & Philosophy, Academics, Enrichment, Arts, Youth Development, Recreation, Health, Nutrition)
 - *Who sets the overall vision of the after school program?*
 - *How do you balance the academic needs of a low-performing program-improvement school with an arts-based focus of the lead CBO that is managing the entire program?*
 - *Does the academic component of the after school program present instruction that is conflicting or confusing with the in-school teachers’ curriculum (e.g., different ways of doing multiplication)?*

- IV. EVALUATION & COMPLIANCE (e.g., enrollment, attendance, test scores, certification, adult-student ratios)
 - *How do CBOs get trained in the record-keeping and tracking required by CDE grants (through the school district)?*
 - *What certification requirements for after school staffing present the greatest challenges for CBOs (who may be accustomed to young volunteers or non-classified staffing)?*

- V. FACILITIES (e.g., shared space classrooms, environment concerns, snack, yard usage)
 - *Who is responsible to additional custodial services or security from 2pm – 7pm?*
 - *How does the after school program balance its need for classroom space with teachers’ needs to use their classrooms after 2pm?*
 - *Does the after school program require the Principal to be on-site and present from 2pm – 7pm?*

- VI. COMMUNITY & FAMILIES (e.g., parents, guardians, community organizations and relations)
 - *Do the after school program’s parent communications present conflicts or confusion for the teacher-parent relationship (regarding the student)?*
 - *If a lead agency CBO hires a service provider CBO to implement a class, who is responsible for any misconduct by the service provider? Is the school ultimately responsible for anything that happens on campus?*

PROTOCOL II: LEA (SCHOOLS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS) INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. DESCRIBING THE PARTNERSHIP

1. What CBOs do you partner with in delivering the ASES and/or 21stCCLC? What is the history of that partnership?
2. What is the role of the CBO in delivering after school program services in your district?

B. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PARTNERSHIP TROUBLESHOOTING

3. Who at the district interacts with the CBO and how does that interaction take place?
4. What are the successful aspects of this particular partnership and how does the district contribute to making it work?
5. What are some challenging situations that the partnership has had to work through and how did you work together to successfully address the issues?
6. What challenges persist and what can the district do to address them?

C. COMMON HOT SPOTS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

After school partnerships require common areas of overlapping and shared decision-making that often raise challenges for CBOs, Schools, and School Districts. These areas involve critical components such as finances, resources, staffing, vision, and relationships.

Please review the list of topics and trigger questions below. Consider your own experiences with “hot spots” in these areas, and how they were resolved.

- I. FINANCE (Budgets, Fundraising, Revenues, Expenditures)
 - *How do we decide line-item changes in a blended budget (Schools with CDE funding; CBOs with outside funding)?*
 - *Do the controls of the school district accounting system present “cash flow” problems for CBOs that must wait for reimbursements?*

- II. HUMAN RESOURCES (Hiring, Firing, Professional Development, Training, Retention, Union Rules, School/Paraprofessional Staff, CBO Staff)
 - *Who selects the After School Site Coordinator?*
 - *Can she/he be a staff member of the CBO?*
 - *Or is she/he required to be a district certificated employee?*

- III. CURRICULUM (Vision & Philosophy, Academics, Enrichment, Arts, Youth Development, Recreation, Health, Nutrition)
 - *Who sets the overall vision of the after school program?*
 - *How do you balance the academic needs of a low-performing program-improvement school with an arts-based focus of the lead CBO that is managing the entire program?*
 - *Does the academic component of the after school program present instruction that is conflicting or confusing with the in-school teachers’ curriculum (e.g., different ways of doing multiplication)?*

- IV. EVALUATION & COMPLIANCE (e.g., enrollment, attendance, test scores, certification, adult-student ratios)
 - *How do CBOs get trained in the record-keeping and tracking required by CDE grants (through the school district)?*
 - *What certification requirements for after school staffing present the greatest challenges for CBOs (who may be accustomed to young volunteers or non-classified staffing)?*

- V. FACILITIES (e.g., shared space classrooms, environment concerns, snack, yard usage)
 - *Who is responsible to additional custodial services or security from 2pm – 7pm?*
 - *How does the after school program balance its need for classroom space with teachers’ needs to use their classrooms after 2pm?*
 - *Does the after school program require the Principal to be on-site and present from 2pm – 7pm?*

- VI. COMMUNITY & FAMILIES (e.g., parents, guardians, community organizations and relations)
 - *Do the after school program’s parent communications present conflicts or confusion for the teacher-parent relationship (regarding the student)?*
 - *If a lead agency CBO hires a service provider CBO to implement a class, who is responsible for any misconduct by the service provider? Is the school ultimately responsible for anything that happens on campus?*