STRATEGY GUIDE

Strengthening Partnerships and Building Public Will for Out-of-School Time Programs

National League of Cities

Institute for Youth, Education, and Families

MADE POSSIBLE WITH SUPPORT FROM THE WALLACE FOUNDATION

Executive Summary

When the bell rings at the end of a school day, millions of children are left to their own devices while they wait for their families to return home at the end of the work day. Findings from a study conducted by the Afterschool Alliance, "America After 3PM," show that 15.1 million children are unsupervised when the school day ends. The out-of-school time hours represent a challenge to families and community members who are looking for safe places and engaging activities for children and youth. The out-of-school time hours also represent a genuine opportunity for municipal leaders — the opportunity to rally the entire community around the goals of keeping children and youth safe and engaged, while also helping to advance a number of other key city priorities.

Mayors, councilmembers and other municipal leaders increasingly recognize that out-of-school time programs can help meet multiple city goals — improving public safety and health, supporting the city's education system, preparing the future workforce and supporting working families — all of which improve a city's economic vitality and overall quality of life. Municipal leaders also understand that in addition to academic content, tomorrow's citizens and workers will need a comprehensive set of "21st century skills" that emphasize problem solving, collaboration, use of technology and creative thinking, and that out-of-school time programs are uniquely suited to develop these skills.

City officials are well positioned to support the development of strong partnerships with key sectors of the community to increase the number and quality of out-of-school time programs. This guide highlights three key strategies that mayors and other city leaders can use to promote partnerships and build public will in support of out-of-school time programs:

- Engage and involve a broad set of partners to take full advantage of all community resources;
- Keep out-of-school time on the public agenda; and
- Lead efforts by city, school and community leaders to establish a common set of outcomes and a shared vision for out-of-school time.

In each of these areas, the guide describes specific actions that municipal leaders can take in their communities and presents brief city profiles to illustrate how they have been used around the country. These strategies, when implemented effectively, build upon and reinforce each other in ways that can sustain momentum and lead to the development of a comprehensive out-of-school time system.

Engage and involve a broad set of partners. In every community, numerous stakeholders can contribute support for out-of-school time programs. Municipal leaders can play a pivotal role in bringing a wide range of partners together from inside and outside of government. Mayors, councilmembers and other municipal officials can encourage interagency collaborations, as well as engage partners from schools, businesses, community and faith-based organizations and institutions of higher learning. All of these stakeholders have an interest in supporting high-quality out-of-school time programs. In San Francisco, for example, the diverse groups that participate in the Afterschool for All Advisory Council have supported citywide initiatives by strengthening public financing strategies, enhancing program quality and addressing workforce concerns. Bringing a variety of stakeholders to the table to work collectively on out-of-school time issues can have a tremendous impact and help move the city's efforts forward.

Municipal leaders can also engage "unusual" partners that do not have an obvious connection with out-of-school time programs. In Tampa, Fla., the city has collaborated with Suncoast Schools Federal Credit Union and WEDU (the local public television station) to add a financial literacy component to out-of-school time offerings throughout the community.

Keep out-of-school time on the public agenda. The commitment of the mayor, councilmembers and other municipal officials is a powerful tool in building public will and a sustained commitment to expand and improve out-of-school time services. Municipal leaders can:

- Use their "bully pulpit" to highlight needs and increase public awareness;
- Develop a coordinated outreach and communications plan;
- Make use of high-profile events to sustain public attention; and
- Regularly seek authentic community input to determine key public priorities.

In many communities, mayors have used a "state of the city" address to promote out-of-school time and encourage community support for citywide initiatives. Such events provide a venue for the mayor to build support for out-of-school time programs by framing the issue as a top priority for the city before a large audience of community leaders.

Lead efforts to establish a common set of outcomes and a shared vision. Municipal leaders can work with the community to create a vision for out-of-school time efforts that aligns with other city, state and national priorities. In Jackson, Tenn., Mayor Jerry Gist launched the "Safe Neighborhoods/Safe Havens" campaign as a means of reducing crime, but it quickly led to discussion of how to increase access to out-of-school time programs. A mapping project that was part of the campaign found a high correlation between high-crime areas and neighborhoods with an inadequate supply of out-of-school time programs and activities.

City leaders can also emphasize the potential value of a coordinating entity to support citywide out-of-school time efforts. An intermediary organization can serve numerous functions, including:

- Providing a neutral forum in which to convene key stakeholders;
- Coordinating use of public and private community resources;
- Promoting adoption of standards for program quality; and
- Improving access to out-of-school time programs and services.

Finally, municipal leaders can help connect a citywide out-of-school time agenda to other community priorities and draw attention to the unique role that high-quality programs can play in achieving desired outcomes. Whether the focus is on raising the graduation rate, closing the achievement gap, developing 21st century skills, supporting working families, fighting crime or preventing childhood obesity, city officials can emphasize the potential contributions that out-of-school time programs can make as part of a broader city strategy and thereby build stronger coalitions that engage many different organizations and systems.

One of the greatest strengths of the three strategies highlighted in this guide lies in the interplay among them. Employed in combination, each strategy builds off of the others. For example, a city-led effort to develop a common set of desired outcomes provides an opportunity to bring partners (and resources) together, and those outcomes can be used to help build public will to sustain and expand out-of-school time initiatives.

When municipal leaders are actively engaged and looking for ways to support local efforts, each strategy becomes a building block in the development of a comprehensive and high-quality system of out-of-school time programs for all of the community's children and youth. A citywide out-of-school time (OST) system is an overarching, community-level infrastructure that supports and helps sustain quality OST programming.[1] By strengthening partnerships and building public will for a citywide OST system, municipal leaders can spearhead a community-wide effort to ensure that all children and youth have access to high-quality programs that develop the skills necessary for lifelong success. With both city and program budgets strained due to tough economic times, cities can reap immense benefits from partnerships that help maximize local out-of-school time resources.

1 Cheryl Hayes, Christianne Lind, Jean Baldwin Grossman, et al. *Investments in Building Citywide Out-of-School Time Systems: A Six-City Study* (Washington, DC: Public/Private Ventures and The Finance Project, 2009).

Strategy 1: Engage and Involve a Broad Set of Partners to Take Full Advantage of All Community Resources

Municipal leaders can play a pivotal role in bringing like-minded partners together to work toward shared goals for children and youth. Mayors, councilmembers and other municipal officials are in a unique position to engage a diverse group of stakeholders inside and outside of government to bring a broad range of perspectives and a wide variety of resources to the table. When a broad and diverse sector of the community "owns" the out-of-school time issue, this priority will have greater staying power on the community agenda.

Within local government, municipal leaders can ensure that city assets are coordinated in ways that maximize opportunities for young people and are appropriately targeted throughout the city. Cross-agency partnerships provide a vehicle for using a broad set of resources in a more strategic way. Municipal leaders can also look outside of city government to schools, businesses, parent groups, youth-serving agencies and universities to coordinate a larger pool of resources and activities for children and youth.

MAKE THE MOST OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Interagency Collaboration

Coordination across city agencies can help municipal officials take full advantage of the expertise, resources and capacity that exist in multiple departments, from parks and recreation to local libraries. Depending upon a city's unique history, multiple agencies may have some responsibility for programs and resources that serve youth. For example, a local department of health may oversee programs to prevent substance abuse, the housing authority may operate or provide funding or space for programs that serve public housing residents, and the police department may operate athletic programs for youth. Municipal leaders can foster a culture that supports innovation and creative thinking around how to realign resources at all levels of city government.

Detroit, Mich.: Multi-Agency Collaboration to Provide Internships in Public Safety, Skilled Trades and Health Care

In 2005, the Youth Connection — a public-private, city-led effort to improve afterschool opportunities that was formerly known as Mayor's Time — forged a partnership with the Detroit Fire Department as one of the lead city agencies supporting a summer internship program. The Youth Connection received two grants for approximately $500,000 from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to fund summer internships for youth. A memorandum of understanding among the city's fire, police, water and homeland security and emergency management departments, Detroit Public Schools and Wayne County Community College District formalized the partnerships that support the internship program, with each department head playing an instrumental role in making the program a success. All departments participate in the program's advisory committee and provide staff and facilities for the internships. In 2009, the program expanded to include new internship dp ff i i advit ed

NURTURE AND COORDINATE EFFORTS OUTSIDE OF CITY GOVERNMENT

In addition to cross-agency coordination, municipal leaders play a vital role in convening partners outside of government. Municipal leaders can help identify opportunities and provide incentives for local organizations to collaborate. Sometimes the city is itself a critical partner, a the iSometime th cit a th i criticis a

Business Partnerships

Community leaders and youth-serving organizations often look to the business community as a potential source of funding for various aspects of the out-of-school time system. While this is a vital role that businesses can and should play, there are other important ways in which municipal leaders can engage the business community to have a far-reaching impact. Business leaders can serve as champions of a citywide system, conduits of information on local programs, employers of older youth and sources of mentors and volunteers.

Many business leaders recognize the value of out-of-school time programs in developing a future workforce and supporting current employees who need to know their children are safe and engaged during the out-of-school hours. Municipal officials can garner support from other segments of the business community by emphasizing how out-of-school time programs meet their priorities and overall citywide goals. For example, the Chicago Out-of-School Time Project, housed in the city's Department of Family and Support Services, has partnered with Chicago Metropolis 2020, a nonprofit civic organization created in 1999 by the Commercial Club of Chicago, a membership organization of area business and civic leaders. In 2009, a strategy team convened by Chicago Metropolis 2020 initiated the After-school for Children and Teens Now (ACT Now) campaign to increase public support for out-of-school time and, ultimately, new or restructured financing for afterschool programs in Illinois.

Another role that municipal leaders can play is to help identify and target businesses with a potential interest in supporting out-of-school time programs and discussing specific ways a particular business could be engaged depending upon its level of interest. The business community may be able to assist out-of-school time program leaders with program management and administration, and can even help with program content on workforce readiness, entrepreneurship or financial literacy. Businesses also have a great deal to offer in the form of in-kind support, including volunteers, printing, media, transportation, materials and supplies. All of these roles meet critical system needs. When municipal leaders are well-armed with clear information on the needs of individual programs and the OST system as a whole, they are in a better position to engage businesses with the ability to help.

Baltimore, Md.: YouthWorks Summer Jobs Program

In Baltimore, the city partners with businesses and community organizations to provide enriching summer jobs to thousands of youth through the annual YouthWorks summer jobs program. Business support for this program helps participating youth develop skills and improves the productivity of the future workforce.

In 2008, Mayor Sheila Dixon exceeded her goal of placing 6,500 youth in summer jobs. More than 6,800 teens had the opportunity to work in six-week summer jobs, a 20 percent increase from 2007. The YouthWorks Leadership Team responded to Mayor Dixon's 2008 outreach strategy, Summer Jobs are Everyone's Business, by raising the equivalent of more than $7.5 million. This lofty goal was accomplished by engaging leaders from business, education, community-based organizations, faith-based institutions, philanthropic organizations and government in supporting the campaign. The number of businesses supporting YouthWorks more than doubled in 2008 as small and large companies agreed to hire older teens directly, as well as donate funds so youth could work for nonprofits, schools and other community groups. Many of the participating employers challenged their peers to do the same.

In 2009, in spite of resource constraints impacting communities nationwide, the city again met its goal of placing more than 6,500 teens in summer jobs, in part due to stronger private and federal support. Numerous businesses and private donations supported YouthWorks at a cost of $1,400 per youth for each six-week job. For instance, Johns Hopkins University and the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Health System funded wages for 250 summer jobs at both facilities, the largest donation ever from the private sector. The City of Baltimore's financial commitment to YouthWorks for 2008 and 2009 was $2.4 million each year. Baltimore also received $3.4 million in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which helped support the summer internship program.

THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN: A CATALYST FOR IMPROVING YOUTH SERVICES

Due to the current economic downturn, family finances are stretched thin and cities have tightened their belts. Yet children continue to need positive out-of-school time opportunities. Experience shows that tough economic times can usher in new opportunities and often bring potential partners together in ways that were not foreseeable when local agencies' coffers were fuller. Taking the time to revisit a city's youth agenda and review progress toward outcomes can put the city in a stronger position to expand services for youth as the economy begins to improve. In addition, municipal leaders have taken advantage of the multiple opportunities to use 2009 federal economic stimulus dollars, many of which give priority to or require strong community partnerships.

The following federal funding streams received increased funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 and can be used to support out-of-school time programs:

- **$2 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant** (CCDBG);
- **$10 billion for Title I** to help disadvantaged students reach high academic standards;
- **$3 billion for School Improvement,** which can be used to improve facilities for out-of-school time programs operating in schools;
- **$1.2 billion through the Workforce Investment Act** that is designated for creating summer jobs for youth;
- **$50 million for YouthBuild,** which offers education and occupational training to at-risk youth for building affordable housing; and
- **$160 million for AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA** programs, a key staffing component for many out-of-school time programs.

For more information on the ARRA legislation and how it may be used to support out-of-school time programs, as well as information on the 2010 federal budget, visit the Afterschool Alliance website at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

Community- and Faith-Based Partnerships

In many cities, the community and faith-based sectors are responsible for a large segment of out-of-school time programming. This includes large national nonprofits like the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Clubs, as well as a multitude of grassroots organizations, churches, synagogues and other religiously-affiliated entities. Some of these organizations, particularly faith-based groups, are not always well-represented in public discussions, and their participation may require more targeted outreach efforts. Municipal leaders have the ability to bring organizations large and small to the table to form strategic partnerships for improving out-of-school time programs. In particular, cities can work with these organizations to improve the skills and qualifications of program staff, develop and implement program quality standards and establish community-wide outcome measures.

Florence, S.C.: Faith-Based Mentors Support Afterschool

In 2004, former Florence Mayor Frank Willis created the Mayor's Coalition to Prevent Juvenile Crime to address a spike in violence against young people. This coalition focused its efforts on creating a citywide afterschool system to increase the quality and availability of afterschool programs in high-need areas. The coalition engaged top leaders from the city, law enforcement, school district, faith-based community, community-based organizations, hospitals and private entities. Their efforts included a new mentoring program at schools in Florence School District One, in which mentors are recruited from the faith-based community and trained through the South Carolina Attorney General's Office. Currently, more than 160 trained mentors are working in the schools with students. Because local leaders and residents recognize the impact that these efforts have on students and the community, it is estimated that the number of faith-based mentors will grow to more than 300 by 2010.

Bridgeport, Conn.: The City Collaborates with the Local United Way

The City of Bridgeport, with the help of the United Way of Coastal Fairfield County, was the driving force in bringing together approximately 35 afterschool service providers and funders to create the Bridgeport After School Network. The network seeks to improve the quality and number of afterschool programs available to Bridgeport's youth. In 2009, the city acted as the fiscal agent for the network, receiving start-up funds that were provided, in large part, by the United Way. This partnership between the city and United Way led to the creation of an out-of-school time network website, regular newsletters and bi-monthly meetings. The network also helps the city capture out-of-school time data from providers through questionnaires, develop long- and short-term goals and build consensus on the use of quality assessment tools, fundraising and communication plans to strengthen the out-of-school time system.

UNITED WAY AS A KEY PARTNER

In many communities, local United Ways have long supported out-of-school time programs, and have promoted early childhood education through the well-known Success by 6 initiative. In 2008, the United Way of America adopted the ambitious goal of helping cut the national dropout rate in half within 10 years. Across the country, local United Ways are now organizing their education and youth programs around this goal, starting with the youngest children and working up through high school and beyond. Because of United Ways' fundraising campaigns and their increasing focus on producing a community-wide impact, they can be important partners in building an out-of-school time system. United Ways are also in a unique position in their communities. They are at the intersection of the business community and nonprofit service agencies and understand the needs and concerns of both.

Parents and Students

As the "users" of the out-of-school time system, parents and students can provide on-the-ground insights into what is working and what is not. However, developing strategies to involve and receive input from students and parents in meaningful ways can be challenging. Many cities have used periodic surveys as one method to learn more about what parents and students need and want. Others have established slots for parents and students on community-wide advisory or planning bodies. Identifying a few key parents or students as emissaries can help municipal leaders gain a deeper understanding of the needs of segments of the community that may feel marginalized or be hard to reach because of language barriers or other challenges. Municipal leaders can advocate for authentic youth voice and parent engagement in decision-making, which can in turn lead to increased participation and more effective programs that meet specific community needs.

Omaha, Neb.: Parents Identify Gaps in Out-of-School Time Opportunities for Middle School Students

In 2006, former Mayor Mike Fahey's After School Initiative and the Center for Organizational Research and Evaluation (CORE) at the University of Nebraska-Omaha conducted an assessment of out-of-school time needs in Omaha. The assessment consisted of an inventory of afterschool providers' services and capacity; a parent survey to identify their use of afterschool programs; an effort to geographically map young people's afterschool needs and gaps in services; and a comprehensive review of afterschool best practices.

The needs assessment identified critical gaps indicating that middle school youth ages 10-14 were underserved. Parents reported that 40 percent of children in late elementary and middle school grades were home without adult supervision at times during the week, that they experienced difficulty in locating programs that provide transportation, affordable fees and healthy snacks, and that they most trust their child's school to run an afterschool program. In addition to showing that parents were looking for programs that would serve older youth, the survey highlighted a demand among parents for programs that offer a balance of academic, cultural and athletic activities, which was not always available in existing afterschool programs.

The needs assessment also identified four underserved geographic areas in Omaha that had a high concentration of children and a low number of afterschool programs. These areas were used to determine the four middle schools for the pilot Middle School Learning Center Initiative (MSLCI) — a collaborative effort of the mayor's office, Omaha Public Schools, the Sherwood Foundation, Building Bright Futures and other community-based organizations and foundations. In 2008, MSLCI added two additional sites to serve more students within the underserved areas.

University Partnerships

Postsecondary institutions can offer numerous resources to support out-of-school time initiatives, from assistance in data collection, research and program evaluation to providing facilities for programs. Schools of education can also provide assistance in staff training and development, help programs identify curricula and link programs to statewide standards. Moreover, colleges and universities can be a great source of mentors and volunteers, and can even provide staff to youth-serving organizations. Municipal leaders may consider reaching out to university leadership to match their schools' expertise and available resources with local out-of-school time needs.

Morgantown, W.Va.: University Students Lead and Support Local Out-of-School Time Programs

The City of Morgantown, Monongalia County Schools and West Virginia University (WVU) have partnered on a number of initiatives that improve the quality of and increase access to out-of-school time activities. WVU seniors in multidisciplinary and psychology studies have completed capstone

Tampa, Fla.: A Credit Union and Public Television Station Promote Financial Literacy during Out-of-School Time
The City of Tampa recently worked with Suncoast Schools Federal Credit Union (FCU) and WEDU, the local public television station, to add a financial literacy component to local out-of-school time programs. This collaboration trains all Partnership for Out-of-School Time (POST) partners to deliver a five-lesson financial literacy program for youth ages eight and older, as well as their parents. A grant that WEDU received from the television program, BizKid$, pays for the materials and training. Following the initial five classes, youth have the opportunity to design what they believe should be the next lesson, and WEDU tapes and airs the top youth-created lessons. Suncoast Schools FCU hosts the financial literacy training and provides incentives for the youth to participate.

CONVENE A VARIETY OF STAKEHOLDERS

Each of the partners mentioned above can bring valuable resources to the table and help move the community's out-of-school time agenda forward. However, the most powerful citywide out-of-school time systems bring together a wide range of stakeholders within and outside of government.

San Francisco: Involving Diverse Stakeholders to Provide Afterschool for All
In San Francisco, the city's Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) and the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) lead the city's Afterschool for All initiative. The cornerstone of this effort is the Afterschool for All Advisory Council. Diverse groups participate in the Advisory Council, which provides a means for joint planning and accountability to develop and expand a comprehensive, citywide afterschool system.

A memorandum of understanding between the two lead entities defines the composition of the Advisory Council, which includes representatives from SFUSD, city agencies, community-based afterschool service providers, parents, foundations and other private sector funders, the faith-based community, the San Francisco Child Care Planning Council and a representative of afterschool programs operated by private schools. In the future, the Advisory Council aims to add representatives from the business community, the juvenile justice and/or law enforcement system, the public housing system and youth members.

The Advisory Council created three voluntary work groups to identify systemic needs and related solutions, such as strengthening public financing strategies, enhancing program quality and addressing workforce concerns. The Advisory Council also developed a cost estimate for a high-quality afterschool program based on local and national research, which will inform the city's strategy to use its funds as leverage for securing state and federal afterschool grants. In addition, the council drafted a set of site visit tools to complement a program quality assessment tool for school-based afterschool programs created by the state department of education, and began to identify a set of core competencies for frontline afterschool workers.

Strategy 2: Keep Out-of- School Time on the Public Agenda

Building sustained support for out-of-school time programs is another critical element for developing a strong citywide system. In many instances, municipal leaders have successfully made the case that a well-functioning out-of-school time system helps cities meet multiple goals: keeping children and their neighborhoods safe and healthy, decreasing juvenile crime, supporting working families and improving the city's education system. Vocal support by the mayor and other high-level municipal leaders can raise the visibility of out-of-school time programs and help the city engage additional partners. Mayors and councilmembers can keep out-of-school time on the public agenda by developing a clear communications plan highlighting the impact of local programs, capitalizing on high-profile events and regularly seeking authentic community input to ensure that system-building efforts are grounded in local priorities.

USE THE "BULLY PULPIT" TO HIGHLIGHT NEEDS AND INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS

Whether led directly by the mayor's office, a city agency or another organization, the process of developing an actionable, citywide out-of-school time agenda requires the commitment of high-level municipal leadership. In addition to bringing other partners to the table (and keeping them there), the mayor can use his or her "bully pulpit" to advance an out-of-school time agenda — even when competing needs and interests could divert the city's focus.

Jacksonville, Fla.: Anti-Crime Initiative Targets Additional Funding Toward Out-of-School Time

In December 2007, Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton convened a diverse group of more than 140 business and community leaders, violence prevention experts and citizens from all geographic areas of the city to "take a step" toward eliminating violent crime in Jacksonville. Following this convening, Mayor Peyton issued an executive order establishing five action groups and asked each group to spend 120 days implementing and expanding successful strategies in the following areas: law enforcement and deterrence; neighborhood safety and stability; education (including literacy and dropout prevention); positive youth development; and intervention and rehabilitation. This community collaboration resulted in the creation of an anti-crime initiative called the Jacksonville Journey.

Mayor Peyton and the Jacksonville City Council reallocated more than $40 million in the 2009 budget to fund Jacksonville Journey. As part of this anti-crime initiative, the city devoted an annual amount of $3.8 million to create and completely fund 15 new afterschool programs. The seven middle school and eight elementary school sites serve 2,850 additional students, bringing the total enrollment in afterschool programs managed by the city's Children's Commission close to 10,000 children. Mayor Peyton's focused attention on the city's crime reduction goal was a critical reason for the increase in afterschool and summer programming for children and youth.

USING A "STATE OF THE CITY" ADDRESS TO PROMOTE AN OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME STRATEGY

Mayoral "state of the city" addresses are now a common, annual event in cities across the country. Mayors use these addresses to review the successes and challenges of the previous year, present their priorities and highlight promising strategies and future initiatives. This event provides the mayor with the opportunity to speak to a large audience of key stakeholders and potential partners and to receive significant media coverage. Unlike a typical press conference, the "state of the city" address also allows the mayor to define his or her complete agenda for youth and to challenge community partners to help the city achieve its vision. Increasingly, mayors are using their annual "state of the city" speeches to advance out-of-school time programs as a strategy for addressing multiple city priorities.

During her 2008 "state of the city" address, Southfield, Mich., Mayor Brenda L. Lawrence announced plans to replicate a successful afterschool initiative in Detroit. "I am working to enter an exciting new partnership to create 'Mayor's Time – Southfield,' an afterschool initiative to increase our students' participation in afterschool programs," Mayor Lawrence said. "Once completed, parents and children in Southfield will have a complete listing of all afterschool programs that serve our youth as well as several new opportunities to get involved in extra-curricular and summer activities. We are looking forward to working with the Parks and Recreation Department, the City Council, our new Youth Center, the Southfield Community Foundation and our Southfield Public Schools, as well as our entire city, to get this initiative moving forward."

DEVELOP A COORDINATED OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

In order to keep out-of-school time on the public's radar, municipal leaders can develop a forward-looking communications plan that outlines the city's message, the methods for sharing those messages and a clear timeline for transmitting the message to the public. City officials can also reinforce their message on out-of-school time when discussing related issues, such as high school completion rates, the educational achievement gap, substance abuse, juvenile crime, childhood obesity rates, quality of life and workforce readiness. For each of these priorities, city leaders can highlight a comprehensive out-of-school time system as part of a broader set of potential solutions. Cities have used a variety of outreach and communication strategies, including:

- Press events highlighting high-quality afterschool programs;
- Out-of-school time summits, which bring together local elected officials and other community leaders for one or more days of high-level meetings;
- Public service announcements or other media-based public outreach campaigns;
- Large public "celebration" events like Lights On Afterschool;
- Important policy speeches like the "state of the city" address;
- Joint brochures and program guides on out-of-school time opportunities; and
- A task force or mayor's council on out-of-school time to raise the visibility of the issue.

Boise, Idaho: Funding for Outreach Helps Connect Children to Programs
In 2006, Boise Mayor David Bieter created the Mayor's Council on Children and Youth (MCCY). The Council includes representatives from local universities and school districts, United Way of Treasure Valley, the Girl Scouts, the local YMCA, the business community and youth. MCCY worked with the city's Information Technology and Public Works Departments to create a searchable online database of local out-of-school time programs (www.after3boise.com). This database gave parents in the Boise area a central portal to quickly locate safe, accessible and affordable afterschool activities in their neighborhoods.

MCCY worked with a local public relations firm that donated much of its time to assist with branding and marketing of the online tool and the public awareness campaign. The firm helped create a brand for Boise's After3 initiative by using information from focus groups, developing a press strategy, designing flyers and bookmarks for distribution and organizing presentations. The city produced out-of-school time public service announcements, purchased bus signs, and printed and distributed the flyers and bookmarks for local corporations and organizations. Several of these organizations distributed the information via their employee and community newsletters and posted links to www.after3boise.com on their websites.

Additionally, MCCY partnered with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to use the 211 phone line for residents without computer access. The mayor and city council have provided approximately $80,000 per year since 2007 to fund the public awareness campaign, maintain the searchable database, conduct community surveys, hold a yearly summit on out-of-school time and pay for the After3 initiative's other expenses.

MAKE USE OF HIGH-PROFILE EVENTS TO SUSTAIN PUBLIC ATTENTION

Communities may offer a variety of venues and existing public events in which mayors and other local officials can make the case for a citywide out-of-school time system. For example, with support from America's Promise- the Alliance for Youth, cities and states across the country have held high-profile dropout prevention summits. America's Promise intends to hold summits in every state and more than 50 cities by 2010. These summits provide municipal officials with an opportunity to link improvements in graduation rates with out-of-school time programs that promote greater attachment to school, enhance student skills and help them gain confidence.

Municipal leaders can help identify public events where diverse partners can discuss the role of out-of-school time programs as part of the solution to a local challenge. For instance, former Tulsa, Okla., Mayor Kathy Taylor, in collaboration with U.S. Attorney David O'Meilia, has built multi-agency support for an anti-gang initiative. Mayor

LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL

Municipal officials can play an active role in supporting local Lights On Afterschool events, which are part of a national campaign sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance to raise awareness about the importance of afterschool programs. Numerous mayors and city councilmembers speak at these annual events and issue proclamations declaring a Lights On Afterschool Day.

In October of 2009, the Afterschool Alliance kicked off the 10th annual Lights On Afterschool celebration in Washington, D.C., with an address from Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, a parade of youth and the release of new nationwide data on "America After 3:00 p.m." showing an increase in the number of young people without access to afterschool programs. The celebration coincided with hundreds of community events in cities across the nation.

During a 2009 Lights On Afterschool stakeholder breakfast and celebration, Columbia, S.C., Mayor Robert Coble and Richland County School District One Superintendent Dr. Percy Mack pledged their support for local out-of-school time programs. The event raised awareness among policymakers and stakeholders from the educational, faith-based, business, health and nonprofit communities. Celebrity Chef Marvin Woods of the "Droppin' Knowledge" Youth Obesity Prevention Afterschool Program in Atlanta gave the keynote address. Woods emphasized the important role that afterschool programs play in combating childhood obesity.

Taylor and U.S. Attorney O'Meilia convened a Building a Safer Tulsa Summit in September 2006 to focus on gang prevention, intervention with gang-involved youth and re-entry for those who have been incarcerated for gang-related crimes. Following recommendations from the summit, Mayor Taylor developed the Mayor's Mentoring to the Max! initiative and facilitated the creation of new afterschool programs.

Nashville, Tenn.: Addressing the Dropout Rate

In December 2007, Mayor Karl Dean convened a 40-member Project for Student Success task force to reduce the number of students dropping out of Metro Nashville Public Schools. The task force included parents, students, education professionals, government officials, neighborhood groups, faith-based organizations, nonprofits and the business community. One of the task force's first major activities was to participate in a dropout summit sponsored by America's Promise in February 2008. This summit provided a wealth of information and ideas for the Project for Student Success workgroups. Each workgroup focused on one of the four key factors shown to influence a student's decision to drop out: student risk factors, chronic poor academic performance, family and parental roles and community risk factors.

In June 2008, after six months of work, the task force presented their recommendations to Mayor Dean. One of the key recommendations was to provide youth, particularly middle school-aged youth, with access to high-quality afterschool and summer opportunities. In November 2008, Mayor Dean created a new position for a Planning Director for Afterschool Initiatives. Additionally, the mayor unveiled plans for the creation of a public-private partnership, the Nashville Afterschool Zone Alliance, in the spring of 2009. In June 2009, the Metro Council approved a $400,000 appropriation to launch a "zone" providing out-of-school time programs to middle school students in one geographic area of Nashville. The city intends to roll out one afterschool zone per year, until six zones throughout the city provide all public middle school youth with access to comprehensive out-of-school time opportunities.

REGULARLY SEEK AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY INPUT TO DETERMINE KEY PUBLIC PRIORITIES

Mayors, councilmembers and other municipal officials frequently meet with community members in a variety of settings to hear from their constituents, communicate their ideas and obtain residents' buy-in on a particular issue. Face-to-face and virtual opportunities to proactively solicit feedback and hear new ideas can help local officials keep the public engaged and generate public will, particularly for programs and services aimed at youth. Hearing the

perspectives of young people can be inspiring and can help city leaders make better decisions and engage youth in local government and the community. When residents believe their leaders listen to their opinions, it is more likely that they will feel real ownership of an issue. Municipal leaders can gather community input on the city's out-of-school time priorities at summits, town halls, community open-house meetings and other locations.

Bogalusa, La.: Community Conversations
Bogalusa MAGIC (Making Achievement Gains In our Community), a project undertaken in 2007 by the city with assistance from NLC and the National Education Association, was aimed at rebuilding the city's out-of-school time options following Hurricane Katrina. A network of organizations, including the City of Bogalusa, Bogalusa City Schools, Bogalusa Association of Educators, YMCA, YWCA, Campfire, Washington Parish Men's Club, faith-based organizations and other community organizations supports Bogalusa MAGIC.

In September 2008, more than 100 community members representing a cross-section of the city attended a series of community conversations. Municipal leaders, youth, parents, educators, business leaders, clergy and other participants brainstormed ideas and discussed ways to "bring the magic back to the magic city" through out-of-school time programs. Facilitators gathering information from the conversations identified common themes, priorities and follow-up actions for meeting the out-of-school time needs of Bogalusa's youth. Bogalusa MAGIC has begun investigating available funding sources, compiling and disseminating information on existing out-of-school time programs and supporting the development of programs to address gaps in services. The community conversations resulted in a closer working relationship among local government, nonprofit agencies and the school system to meet the common goal of making high-quality out-of-school time opportunities available to all Bogalusa youth.

USING "MARKET RESEARCH" TO UNDERSTAND CITYWIDE PRIORITIES

Some cities have conducted a qualitative analysis to better understand what parents and youth want out of local out-of-school time programs. Using a "market research" approach, these cities have employed surveys and focus groups to learn how families and youth make decisions about participation in out-of-school time programs, as well as what they are looking for and how they assess quality. This research can help municipal leaders understand whether programs are meeting families' needs and if changes are needed at the individual program level or at the system level.

For example, program leaders in Washington, D.C., learned that teachers in their community exert significant influence over teenagers. In response, they worked with teachers to help publicize programs, recruit participants and work in their programs. Providence, R.I., officials opted to put more emphasis on sports programming based on the results of its market research. When it is used to inform program development and quality, the use of market research can boost participation and satisfaction and improve an out-of-school system's outcomes.

Source: The Wallace Foundation. *A Place to Grow and Learn: A Citywide Approach to Building and Sustaining Out-of-School Time Learning Opportunities*. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation, 2008.

Strategy 3: Lead Efforts by City, School and Community Leaders to Establish a Common Set of Outcomes and a Shared Vision for Out-of-School Time

Municipal leaders can work with community partners to create a common vision for out-of-school time, as well as a shared set of priorities and outcome measures. A clear vision and plan will help city leaders demonstrate to funders, taxpayers, businesses and the community at large that resources directed toward out-of-school time are being spent wisely and that programs are making a difference for youth and helping the city meet various goals.

Citywide systems are most effective when one or more specific entities have responsibility for monitoring progress and managing the work. An intermediary organization or other coordinating body can play an essential role in the continued growth of quality out-of-school time programs by helping stakeholders develop and track outcomes and adhere to a shared citywide vision. Municipal leaders can support the efforts of a coordinating entity to bring partners to the table, ensure accountability and develop a more solid foundation for a citywide system.

CREATE AN OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME VISION THAT ALIGNS WITH LARGER CITY, STATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Whether the focus is on raising the graduation rate, closing the achievement gap, developing 21st century skills, supporting working families, fighting crime or preventing childhood obesity, municipal leaders can emphasize the potential contributions that out-of-school time programs can make as part of a broader city strategy. A vision for the city's out-of-school time agenda that resonates with the community and the city's priorities will make parents and other residents more likely to participate and be supportive. By gaining buy-in and long-term commitment to this vision, cities stand a better chance of achieving and maintaining outcomes over time.

Jackson, Tenn.: The Safe Neighborhoods/Safe Havens Campaign

In 2007, Jackson Mayor Jerry Gist publicly launched the Safe Neighborhoods/Safe Havens campaign to keep children and youth safe from crime and gang activity. This campaign enabled city and school district leaders, the police and sheriff's departments and others to increase the accessibility of out-of-school time activities as part of their vision to reduce crime in Jackson. The mayor began by forming a Safe Neighborhoods Task Force to study ways to enhance neighborhood revitalization and reduce crime. Responding to one of the task force's recommendations, the mayor called on all youth-serving organizations and agencies to play leadership roles in the development of a vision and action plan, beginning with a Youth Services Providers Summit in February 2008.

Following the summit, the group of youth service providers completed a mapping and demographics study to identify available resources for young people and to identify gaps in out-of-school time services. The study found that youth in high-crime neighborhoods had inadequate access to out-of-school time activities. With concrete data on the gaps in program availability in hand, the city realigned programming to improve access in the underserved areas.

DEVELOP OUTCOME MEASURES TAILORED TO THE UNIQUE ROLES THAT OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS PLAY IN THE COMMUNITY

Municipal officials can strengthen their citywide out-of-school time systems by setting measurable targets and assessing the system's progress in achieving those outcomes. Maintaining a focus on results and accountability will help cities demonstrate the value of investments in out-of-school time programs to both partner organizations and the public. Some cities have used data management systems to track the impact of regular participation in out-of-school time programs on school attendance and academic achievement. Other cities monitor the extent to which programs that emphasize fitness and nutrition improve participants' health outcomes or health knowledge. To accurately measure the impact of local programs, municipal leaders can work closely with program providers to strengthen data collection efforts and analyze the relationship between program participation and citywide outcome goals.

By examining program outcomes over time, municipal leaders can assess whether current efforts are making a difference for youth and what adjustments need to be made to the citywide system. City officials can play an important role in advocating for better data collection and evaluation. Success in identifying concrete outcomes will help local officials enlist new partners and keep current partners engaged, while building public will for out-of-school investment.

The process of assessing outcomes is often a catalyst for program improvements and new collaborations. Key leaders and organizations with the capacity and resources to meet citywide goals may get involved after gaining a clear understanding of how their contributions make a difference. The agreement among a large number of organizations on common goals and outcomes can increase the potential for new partnerships, leading to stronger accountability and more sustainable funding.

Grand Rapids, Mich.: Outcome Measures Demonstrate the Value of Out-of-School Time Programs
With the support of Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell, Our Community's Children — formerly known as the Mayor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, and now a public/private partnership of the City of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids Public Schools and various community organizations — has made enormous strides in expanding access to afterschool programs and ensuring they meet high quality standards. To measure the impact of afterschool programs, Our Community's Children partnered with the Grand Rapids Police Department and the Community Research Institute at Grand Valley State University to share afterschool data for the city's March 2009 Juvenile Offense Index Report. The report found that youth crimes occur overwhelmingly in the hours immediately after school on weekdays, as well as during the evening on both school and non-school days. Additionally, a pilot study found that afterschool program participants were not involved in juvenile offenses. The city and other stakeholders are using these data to highlight the need for adequate out-of-school time programming.

DEVELOP A COORDINATING ENTITY TO SUPPORT CITYWIDE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME EFFORTS

Municipal officials can articulate the importance of developing or designating an entity to provide long-term support for an out-of-school time system. Especially in tight fiscal times, a coordinating entity can help a community make the best possible use of all resources and provide a structure that facilitates efforts to combine resources and streamline programs. Some of the specific tasks that an intermediary organization or coordinating entity may perform include:

- Providing a neutral forum in which to convene key stakeholders and help link potential partners;
- Coordinating the use of public and private community resources;
- Assisting in the development and promotion of quality standards;
- Conducting needs assessments and identifying gaps in programming;
- Identifying system-wide staff development needs and providing or brokering training;
- Promoting the development of effective policies; and
- Mobilizing public will and building political support.[2]

In many cases, especially in the early stages of system development, city offices or agencies fulfill all or part of this coordinating role. However, one or more separate organizations often assume responsibility for this work or the coordinating functions are absorbed into the work of an existing nonprofit, with the city remaining engaged as a key partner.

Providence, R.I.: The Providence After-School Alliance Serves as a Citywide Intermediary
In July 2004, Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline launched the Providence After-School Alliance (PASA), a public-

2 Martin J. Blank, et al. *Local Intermediary Organizations: Connecting the Dots for Children, Families and Youth,* (Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future, 2003).

VANCOUVER, WASH.: USING THE MAYORS' ACTION CHALLENGE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AS AN OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Many cities have used the Mayors' Action Challenge for Children and Families (www.mayorsforkids.org) as a framework for identifying desired outcomes for out-of-school time programs and the overall well-being of children and families. Founded by a group of 26 prominent mayors in November 2008, the Challenge calls on mayors to set specific, measurable, locally-defined goals and targets in four areas to ensure that every child has, at a minimum:

- Opportunities to learn and grow;
- A safe neighborhood to call home;
- A healthy lifestyle and environment; and
- A financially fit family in which to thrive.

Throughout 2009, more than 100 mayors joined this Challenge as they seek to promote municipal leadership and innovation on behalf of children and families.

As part of the Challenge, former Vancouver, Wash., Mayor Royce Pollard supported the establishment of the Vancouver Coalition for Out-of-School Time with the objective of developing a sustainable, comprehensive system of afterschool programs.

"The afterschool hours can be a time of great risk or great opportunity for youth. It is our responsibility to ensure that children have the chance to take advantage of this time and grow as active participants in our community," said Mayor Royce Pollard.

In May 2009, the coalition launched a new online program locator website (www.schoolsoutletsgo.org), which helps parents and youth search from a list of more than 100 different out-of-school time programs. The coalition has also developed a set of basic standards for quality out-of-school time programming, which are available on the website. These new resources will help Vancouver meet local targets for out-of-school time and strengthen the city's vision to provide young people with opportunities to learn and grow.

private venture to develop a citywide system of high-quality, affordable, out-of-school time enrichment opportunities. Today, PASA serves as the intermediary for the city's AfterZones program, a citywide afterschool system serving more than 1,000 middle school youth per year at school-centered, community "campuses."

Each neighborhood AfterZone provides diverse programming through partnerships among schools, libraries, community centers and other youth-serving organizations. PASA provides a variety of supports to the AfterZones, including administering their grant program, working with the school district to garner needed resources, advocating for additional funds and collecting and analyzing administrative and program data. PASA has also helped establish a citywide out-of-school time data collection system called Youthservices.net. This system enabled PASA to generate detailed school bus rider lists, which helped PASA convince the school system to allow Zone participants to ride the school system's "late" buses — solving a key participation hurdle with few added costs. In addition, PASA helps individual programs with financing issues. For example, PASA brought several community providers together into a collaborative to access needed insurance.

CONCLUSION

The three strategies highlighted in this guide — engaging a diverse set of partners, keeping out-of-school time on the public agenda and developing common outcome measures — are most effective when employed in combination. City-led efforts to develop a common set of outcomes provide an opportunity to bring partners and resources together, and those outcomes can in turn be used to build public will for sustaining and expanding out-of-school time initiatives. Each strategy is a building block in the development of a comprehensive and high-quality out-of-school time system.

Given the significant budget constraints caused by the recent economic downturn, cities have little choice but to work collaboratively with other stakeholders to provide out-of-school time programs more efficiently. In addition to maximizing resources, a citywide system can successfully make a difference for youth when it is built on the active participation and commitment of local partners and residents. By mobilizing their communities, municipal leaders can sustain and bring a citywide system to scale, and ultimately make the best use of all local resources for children and youth.

Resources

The following resources provide additional guidance and information on developing partnerships and building public will.

GENERAL

American Youth Policy Forum. *Helping Youth Succeed Through Out-of-School Time Programs.* Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum, 2006.
http://www.aypf.org

Blank, Martin J. and Amy Berg. *All Together Now: Sharing Responsibility for the Whole Child.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2006.
http://www.ascd.org

Hayes, Cheryl, Christianne Lind, Jean Baldwin Grossman, et al. *Investments in Building Citywide Out-of-School Time Systems: A Six-City Study.* Washington, DC: Public/Private Ventures and The Finance Project, 2009.
http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter

The Time, Learning, and Afterschool Task Force. *A New Day for Learning.* Flint, MI: Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, 2007.
http://www.newdayforlearning.org

The Wallace Foundation. *A Place to Grow and Learn: A Citywide Approach to Building and Sustaining Out-of-School Time Learning Opportunities.* New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation, 2008.
http://www.wallacefoundation.org

STRATEGY 1: ENGAGE A BROAD SET OF PARTNERS

The Afterschool Alliance. "Afterschool: The Bridge Connecting Schools and Communities." *Afterschool Alert Issue Briefs* 30 (November 2007).
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org

Berg, Amy, Atelia Melaville and Martin J. Blank. *Community & Family Engagement: Principals Share What Works.* Washington, DC: Coalition for Community Schools, 2006.
http://www.communityschools.org

The Council for Corporate & School Partnerships. *Guiding Principles for Business and School Partnerships.* Atlanta, GA: The Council for Corporate & School Partnerships, 2002.
http://www.corpschoolpartners.org

STRATEGY 2: KEEP OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME ON THE PUBLIC AGENDA

Grady, Michael, Robert Rothman, and Hal Smith. *Engaging Cities*: *How Municipal Leaders Can Mobilize Communities to Improve Public Schools.* Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform, 2006.
http://www.annenberginstitute.org

Pokela, Julianne, Ingrid Steblea, Jeffrey Steblea, et al. *Getting Started with Market Research for Out-of-School Time Planning: A Resource Guide for Communities.* Northampton, MA: Market Street Research, 2007.
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Public Education Network. *Strategic Interventions for Community Change: Communities at Work*. Washington, DC: Public Education Network, 2003.
http://www.publiceducation.org

Turnbull, Brenda. *Citizen Mobilization and Community Institutions: The Public Education Network's Policy Initiatives*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, 2006.
http://www.publiceducation.org

STRATEGY 3: ESTABLISH A COMMON SET OF OUTCOMES AND A SHARED VISION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

The Forum for Youth Investment. "Speaking in One Voice: Toward Common Measures for OST Programs & Systems." *Out-of-School Time Policy* Commentary 13 (November 2008).
http://forumfyi.org

Blank, Martin J., Betsy Brand, Sharon Deitch, et al. *Local Intermediary Organizations: Connecting the Dots for Children, Families and Youth*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future, 2003.
http://www.jff.org