The Four Elements of Afterschool System Success

Young people can benefit academically, socially and emotionally from high-quality afterschool. Historically, however, the field has been decentralized and disorganized, resulting in a lack of access to effective programs. In response, many cities are developing afterschool systems to coordinate efforts and resources. Their work and a growing body of research point to four key elements of a successful system, described in the report Growing Together, Learning Together: What Cities Have Discovered About Building Afterschool Systems. To read the report and related publications, visit wallacefoundation.org

AFTERSCHOOL SYSTEMS BY THE NUMBERS

19.4 MILLION
more children would be enrolled in afterschool if a program were available to them
Source: America After 3PM, Afterschool Alliance, 2014

AT LEAST 77
of the 275 largest U.S. cities have put in place at least one element of an afterschool system
Source: Is Citywide Afterschool Coordination Going Nationwide?, FHI 360, 2013

4 OUT OF 5
Cities in Wallace’s first afterschool system-building initiative increased the number of students served
Source: Hours of Opportunity vol. 1, RAND, 2010

25%
Fewer missed school days: Students who took part in Providence’s AfterZone missed about three weeks of school over two years, compared to four weeks for students who did not participate
Source: AfterZone: Outcomes for Youth Participating in Providence’s After-School System, Public/Private Ventures, 2011

67%
Of cities with a “highly committed” mayor increased or maintained funding for afterschool system building, compared to only 12% of cities with a “moderately committed mayor”
Source: Is Citywide Afterschool Coordination Going Nationwide?, FHI 360, 2013

“The biggest pay-off [of Providence’s system-building work] is the consistent high quality of the experience… Graduates can look back on it. Their siblings can look forward to it. Our school principals would be bereft without it. You just don’t get that with a patchwork of programs.”

–Hillary Salmons, executive director of the Providence After School Alliance