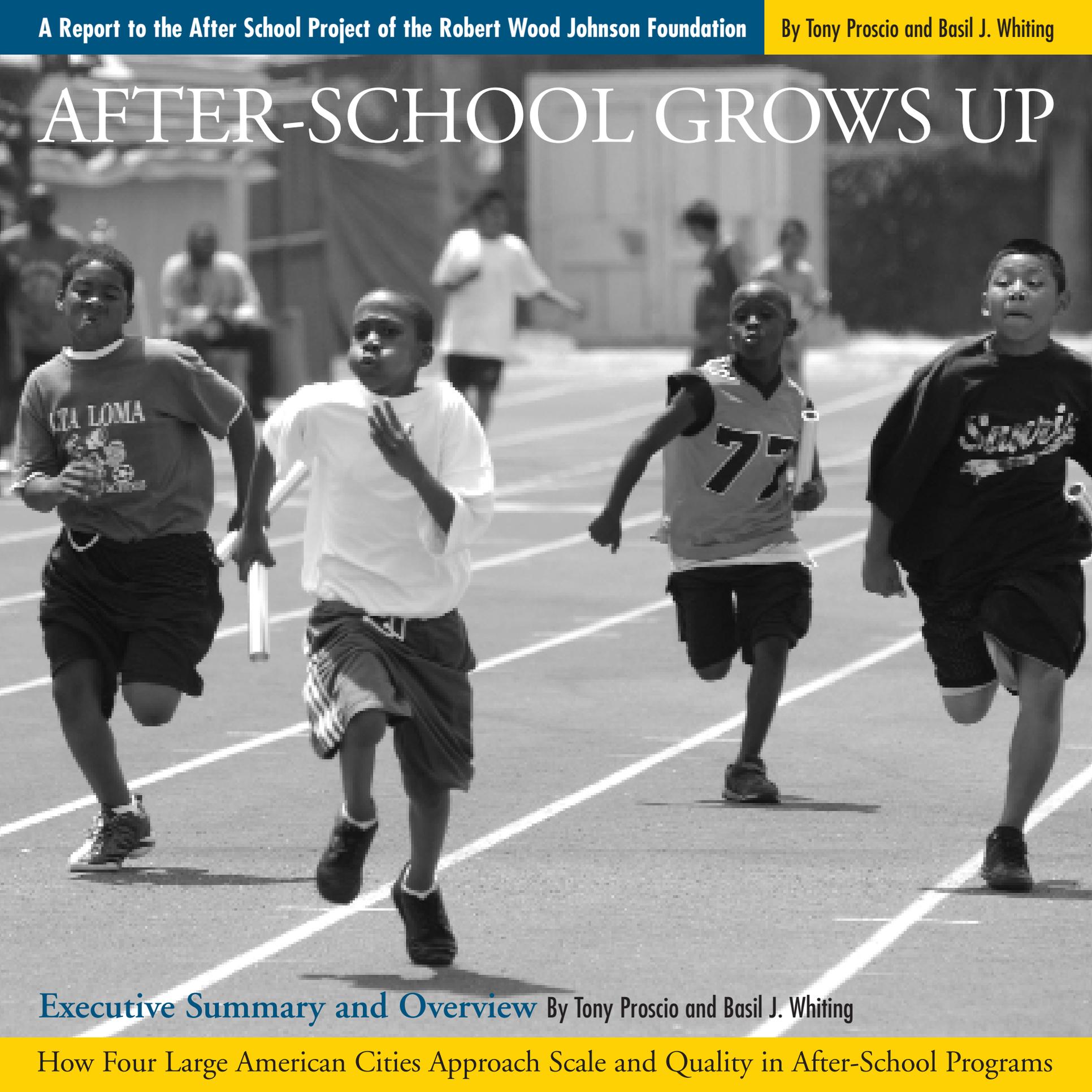


AFTER-SCHOOL GROWS UP



Executive Summary and Overview By Tony Proscio and Basil J. Whiting

How Four Large American Cities Approach Scale and Quality in After-School Programs

Executive Summary

THE PROLIFERATION OF BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL SERVICES across the United States testifies to a growing demand among working parents, educators, child-welfare advocates, and public officials for supervised activity for young people beyond the normal school day. Although the demand is widespread, and out-of-school-time programs are multiplying, very few cities have any coherent, firmly established system for funding, promoting, or regulating these activities. The programs constitute, in most places, a patchwork of independent efforts cobbled together by individual neighborhoods and schools, funded by a hodgepodge of often unrelated grants and contracts, and certified or evaluated by no single authority.

Yet in at least four large cities, a more deliberate, organized system for out-of-school programs is beginning to emerge. In one, San Diego, that system now offers before- and after-school programs in every elementary and middle school in the city (though not yet to every interested student in every school). In three others — New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago — ambitious after-school programs are beginning to resemble a broad-based system, touching a significant percentage of neigh-

borhoods and public schools across the city, at least at some grade levels.

In New York and Chicago, where a patchwork of many before- and after-school programs has emerged over many years, recent initiatives could be models for — or at least presage — more coherent ways of organizing after-school services city-wide. And in Los Angeles, a well-known and now well-established initiative for troubled elementary schools has been the stimulus for a citywide bureaucratic structure for potentially comprehensive before- and after-school programming. Though none of these systems is yet fully formed, all are at a stage where other states and localities might begin to find in them a set of useful models, lessons, or at least ideas and experiences to ponder.

This paper examines these four emerging systems in some detail, beginning with an overview that synthesizes the main patterns and themes, and ending with individual studies of each program. The four are:

The After-School Corporation (TASC) in New York City. TASC channels public and private funding to after-school programs in just under 18 percent of the city's 1,100 elementary, middle, and

high schools, as of the end of 2003. The programs are jointly sponsored by the school and a nonprofit organization, which have wide latitude in designing curricula, recruiting staff, and planning activities. All programs operate from 3 to 6 p.m. on all regular school days. New York City and State provide considerable funding through TASC for these activities, but many other, smaller after-school efforts also operate in city schools with separate funding from the city and state. TASC is an independent nonprofit organization created in 1998 by a private foundation, and does not yet have the status of a recognized, permanent, citywide delivery mechanism for New York City after-school programs.

LA's BEST in Los Angeles. Founded in 1988 and thus one of the oldest well-structured, large-scale programs in the country, LA's BEST intentionally operates only in elementary schools in designated "high risk" neighborhoods. Of the 227 schools that meet that definition, the program provides after-school services in 114. It is, in effect, a program of local government, though its structure is unusual, and complex. LA's BEST is mainly governed, promoted, and substantially funded by a nonprofit corporation housed in the Mayor's Office, where

the Chief Executive Officer and her staff work. Its school-level functions, however, are carried out and supervised by an Operations Office that is grafted onto the Los Angeles Unified School District and now resides in a major branch devoted to expanding before- and after-school programming at all levels throughout the district. Staff in the schools and regional supervisors, plus the Chief Operating Officer of LA's BEST, are all on the payroll of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

After School Matters (ASM) in Chicago. ASM owes its existence, most of all, to Maggie Daley, wife of Mayor Richard M. Daley, who first conceived and created a network of summertime and after-school arts programs for teenagers in the early 1990s. Convinced that teenagers are poorly served by most after-school programs nationwide, Mrs. Daley set out in 2000 to expand the arts model to a system of paid apprenticeships in sports, computer technology, and communications, as well as the arts, with facilities and funding provided by the mayor and the city agencies that govern the school, park, and library systems. After School Matters, an independent nonprofit whose board is chaired by Mrs. Daley, channels these resources to programs

in the participating high schools. It also offers a less-structured network of recreational “clubs” where teens can drop in any time, without the structure or rigors of the paid apprenticeships. At the end of 2003, After School Matters was operating in about one-quarter of Chicago’s 100 public high schools.

San Diego’s “6 to 6.” Not only is “6 to 6” the only program in this sample that reaches every elementary and middle school citywide (plus one high school), but it is the only one that universally offers before-school services as well as after-school. It is a regular program of city government, incorporated into the city’s Department of Community and Economic Development. Activity in the schools is carried out by nonprofit organizations working under contracts with the department’s Division of Community Services. To serve every school within the city limits, “6 to 6” must collaborate not only with the San Diego Unified School District, but with nine other independent districts whose boundaries overlap with some portion of the city. In some wealthier neighborhoods where after-school activities are already plentiful, but where many programs charge tuition, the city has chosen to issue tuition vouchers to help lower-income families participate in existing programs, rather than to create new ones. San Diego’s “6 to 6” started in 1998.

Although all four of these programs are big enough to constitute the leading or guiding model for a citywide system of after-school services, only San Diego’s “6 to 6” comes close to being the single comprehensive model or system for out-of-school programs in its city. The other three programs profiled here are beginning to acquire the critical mass from which a complete system could be built, or at least envisioned. Most of these programs face some remaining organizational hurdles before they could reach every student for whom they’re intended. Most struggle with limitations on space in schools or recreation facilities, some might have difficulties in recruiting faculty for a dramatically larger program. But all of them could grow substantially larger than they are today, and do it fairly quickly, if there were simply more money available.

All four programs make up their budgets from a tangle of different funding streams, some of them from sources far removed from traditional education and youth development systems, such as juvenile justice, recreation and health, employment and job training, and community development. All of them use school space rent-free and all except Chicago’s After School Matters draw support from the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. Beyond that, funding for these programs varies in many ways from city to city and often from year to year in complex patterns that even their leaders sometimes struggle to

describe. Still, the fact that all programs draw from essentially the same broad mix of different sources of money suggests the emergence of a kind of funding model, increasingly common but still dizzyingly complicated.

All of these programs juggle multiple demands from multiple constituencies. Defining who their “customer” is and what they are supposed to achieve for their customers remains a challenge, not only for these four programs but for the whole field of after-school activity. Most of the people responsible for these programs would like to see them broaden students’ exposures to the arts, sports, and their social and physical environments; raise their educational performance; contribute to their healthy development; provide safe places for children before and after school; reduce chances that kids might engage in drugs, crime, or gangs; make work days more manageable for parents; and promote interpersonal skills and self-confidence that will serve students in later years. But are all of those goals necessary or even achievable? If one or more of them isn’t met, does that reflect poorly on the program?

Most of these programs are being evaluated with varying degrees of rigor on at least some of these criteria (in L.A.’s case, several scholarly evaluations have already been completed, with favorable results on a number of factors). But considering the difficulty they face in building and maintaining their

funding, organizing and enlarging their scope of operations, accounting to the various public and private agencies that support them, and maintaining good relations with their ultimate constituents — parents and students — it would be remarkable indeed if they were found to have excelled at all their broader purposes.

At this point, parents, schools, and cities increasingly demand after-school programs of at least decent quality and safety to fill in those workday hours when, in most homes, no adult is around. To meet that demand, cities and states, and perhaps the federal government, will need to arrange a more coherent system of support for after-school care than now exists in most places. The programs here represent a credible start in that direction, even before most of them are thoroughly evaluated. Given that most of these programs are not yet a decade old (LA’s BEST, in its 16th year as this goes to press, is the exception) it will be a significant achievement if any or all of them manage to enlarge their cities’ roster of available after-school services, ensure some basic standards of quality, stabilize their funding, and serve more families than are being served today.

Overview: Snapshot of an Expanding Universe

FOR 35 YEARS, since the 1960s, the City of San Diego had kept its school playgrounds open in lower-income neighborhoods to give kids a safe place to play after school. Each playground had an adult supervisor from the Park and Recreation Department who threw out a few balls and kept an eye on things. It was a way of making the school useful to the neighborhood in off hours, and of giving kids an alternative to roaming the streets or watching TV. But on a few rainy days in the early 1990s, city officials began to notice something peculiar.

When the weather was inclement, the Park Department normally figured kids wouldn't want to play outdoors, and therefore didn't send the playground supervisors. But more and more, the kids were showing up anyway. The sight of clusters of wet children hanging around rainy schoolyards with apparently nowhere else to go fed a growing concern about the safety of children of working parents. "That," says San Diego Child Care Supervisor Deborah Ferrin, "is when the city realized that families were using this for latch-key child care." Within a few years, San Diego's citywide before- and after-school program, called "6 to 6," was born. It was to become the first truly citywide out-of-school-time system in the United States.

By then, of course, large government-sponsored after-school¹ programs were hardly new. One hundred miles to the north, Los Angeles was nearing the tenth birthday of its seminal after-school program called LA's BEST, which by then was in close to 100 schools in lower-income parts of the city. Antipoverty and anti-delinquency programs dating back to the 1950s featured various kinds of after-hours programs in schools, at least for some neighborhoods and children. What was comparatively new, as San Diego discovered on that series of rainy days, was that a considerable number of families — especially working parents with modest incomes — had come to regard out-of-school-time programs not as an interesting social experiment or useful resource, but as a necessity.

In 1970, 39 percent of mothers with children 18 years old and younger worked outside the home. By 1997, the percentage had exactly doubled: Nearly four of every five mothers had jobs away from home, and children who left school at 3 o'clock to find a parent waiting in the house had become the exception, not the rule. Yet even years later, as this is written, licensed child care remains scarce and, for many families, unaffordable. Other community or extracurricular activities after school may be a welcome

alternative to TV or the streets, but most of them are too episodic to depend on every day. And they are far more common in wealthier neighborhoods than in poor ones. Meanwhile, the risks of unsupervised activity after school have surely grown far worse since those early experiments of the 1950s.

At the same time, cash-strapped schools, especially in less affluent neighborhoods, have become increasingly eager for arts, athletics, and other so-called enrichment programs outside the school day, as more and more normal hours are taken up with basics like reading, math, and science. So, just as parents increasingly look to schools as a safe place for their children to spend the last hours of the work day, schools themselves are looking to the non-school hours as a way to supplement their daytime curriculum.

Federal programs, most notably the 21st Century Learning Centers, and after-school initiatives in most states testify to this growing demand (or perhaps more to the point, the growing political constituency) for after-school services. Increasingly, mayors and school officials have begun looking for ways to extend out-of-school-time activity to every school and neighborhood, or at least to most of them. Yet with very few exceptions, these discussions have been tenta-

1 To be fully accurate about before-and-after-school programs like San Diego's, and to take account of an important issue in the debates about out-of-school-time services, we would have preferred an alternative to the expression "after-school," which some consider too limiting. Yet alternatives like "before- and after-school" or "out-of-school-time" are both more cumbersome and less familiar to most people. We therefore stick with the common, brief expression, except when describing initiatives that routinely operate in the morning. In general, we encourage readers to interpret this discussion as referring, at least in principle, to services that could be offered before the school day begins as well as after it ends.

...the popular demand for widespread after-school services has created something like an irresistible force for many local officials. The result is that after-school systems, albeit mostly piecemeal and still fragile, are forming in several places.

tive, inconclusive, or purely hypothetical. The reality, for most cities, is that there is still no coherent system of funding, administration, service delivery, regulation, and policy formation for widespread after-school activity. All these elements exist to some degree, but usually in a fragmentary or haphazard way. To establish out-of-school activities on a citywide basis, with programs in all (or even most) schools, would mean organizing a system almost from scratch.

Robert Halpern, human services scholar at the Erikson Institute in Chicago, summarized the challenge in a 2003 paper:

There is no one institutional locus, no widely accepted governance mechanisms, no over-arching goals, policies, or regulations guiding or constraining programs, and no commonly determined decision-making structures or procedures. Boundaries are porous and shifting. Leadership is diffuse and informal, based largely on length of involvement in the field, and to some extent self-selected. Different priorities and requirements are stipulated by numerous individual funders and sponsors, often without much attention to what others are requiring (or to the mission of longstanding after-school providers).²

When cities do manage to piece together some form of local after-school system, Halpern writes, the results tend to be:

reliant on and actually made up of parts of other systems — social services, early childhood care and education, public schools, parks and recreation, the cultural and arts sectors — that typically are larger, better funded (at least in relative terms), and have their own dynamics and preoccupations....When [these] other systems are under stress, their marginal activities — including after-school programs — are particularly vulnerable.³

Yet as time goes on, the popular demand for widespread after-school services has created something like an irresistible force for many local officials. The result is that after-school systems, albeit mostly piecemeal and still fragile, are forming in several places. This paper presents four examples of large cities where something like a citywide system is taking shape. None of these yet offers service to every school-age youngster in every neighborhood at every age level. Some aren't intended to go that far; others are still under construction and haven't yet determined how far they can go. But all four are meant to be more than just a way of funding or encouraging after-school pro-

grams here and there. All are designed to be “systems” in the sense that Halpern and others use the term: an integrated set of persistent funding streams, legal or regulatory authorities, authorized providers, and auxiliary organizations (typically called intermediaries) for training, consulting, quality assurance, and financial support.

The four cases are strikingly different from one another (the accompanying table gives a rough summary of their basic characteristics). Although we try, in this introductory discussion, to make comparisons and draw out common themes, it is worth pondering how qualified most of the comparisons are, and how tentative are some of the themes. The main reason for this seems to be that each city is blending the “parts of other systems” differently, each with its own particular mix of funding streams, balance of government and nonprofit roles, and sources of political and administrative leadership. The result, for example, is that each reckons its costs in slightly different ways. If one city gets its custodial or security services directly from the school system, for instance, it may not include those items in its total cost of after-school service. Elsewhere, providers may have to pay for such services and thus have to put them in their budget. Cost comparisons, like most other comparisons, are therefore meant to convey

2 Robert Halpern, “The Challenge of System-Building in the After-School Field: Lessons from Experience,” Chicago: Erikson Institute for Graduate Study in Child Development, 2003, p.3.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

This focus on large-scale local programs reflects the reality of how after-school systems are actually developing in most of the United States.

After-School Programs: A Quick Comparison

	New York City TASC*	Los Angeles LA's BEST*	Chicago ASM*	San Diego San Diego's "6 to 6"
School levels served	E/M/H	High Risk E only	HS only	All E/M
Number of funded slots**	41,233	19,000	4,100	24,519
Number of students in city schools	1,050,000	364,906 E only	101,100 HS only	135,794 in E/M
Number of public schools served	193	114	24	194† public + 10 private
Number of public schools in city	1,164	432 elementary, 227 defined "high risk"	100 high schools	193 E/M
Hours of program operation per day	3-6 pm	2:30-6 pm	3-6 pm	6-7:30am; 2:15-6 pm
Days of operation per week	5 days	5 days	3 days	5 days
Adult/student ratio	1:10	1:20	1:10	1:15 E; 1:20 M
Cost per funded slot	\$1,600	\$1,357	\$1,740‡	\$979 (afternoon hours only)
Locus of authority	Nonprofit	Nonprofit Corporation in Mayor's Office; LA Unified School District	Nonprofit + 3 city agencies	City Department of Community and Economic Development
In-school operations conducted by	Community Organizations	LA School District	ASM & Community Organizations	Community Organizations
Year started	1998	1988	2000	1998

* Many other before/after-school programs operate in these cities; the profiled programs are the largest and best known.

** These are estimates in some cases; actual enrollment and average daily attendance vary.

† San Diego's "6 to 6" also serves one high school.

‡ Student apprentices in Chicago are paid an average stipend of \$780 for a full year of participation, bringing the total cost to \$2,520.

rough impressions. They do not reward detailed scrutiny or analysis.

Even to refer to "cities" in this discussion is a risky oversimplification. The Los Angeles after-school initiative, called LA's BEST, covers the whole Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), a metropolitan authority comprising nine municipalities including Los Angeles, plus portions of 18 others. In San Diego, where the "6 to 6" out-of-school-time

program covers every elementary and middle school within the city limits, it was necessary to enlist the cooperation of nine separate school districts whose boundaries not only overlap with those of the city but also reach far out into the metropolitan area. The New York initiative, called The After School Corporation (TASC), serves many areas outside New York City, though the profile in this paper describes only its activities within

the city limits. Yet calling even that portion of TASC's effort a "city" program could suggest more of a connection with municipal government than in fact exists. The drive for a citywide after-school program in New York did not, in fact, originate at City Hall, but in the offices of a prominent international foundation. To this day, the effort is warmly welcomed and fairly well funded by the current mayor and schools chancellor, but is not

All...pay their costs with a combination of federal, state, and local dollars from a wide mix of government programs plus private donations.

officially engraved in any citywide policy.

Still, these definitional issues are minor, compared with the main characteristic that makes all four initiatives significant: All of them started at or near the municipal level, and all of them aim to serve a great percentage of the children in some target age-range within their local jurisdiction. This focus on large-scale local programs reflects the reality of how after-school systems are actually developing in most of the United States. Until 2002, when Californians passed the statewide after-school mandate called Proposition 49, nearly all serious attempts to develop broad and stable after-school systems for all or most students have been local, albeit with increasing amounts of state and federal support.

For large cities especially, these four examples demonstrate that size alone is not a barrier to an expansive vision for citywide after-school services. The examples in this paper represent the three largest U.S. cities plus the seventh-largest, San Diego. The most universal of the four initiatives, San Diego's, covers every elementary and middle school in the city. The rest are less comprehensive than that — Los Angeles' program, for example, is limited just to elementary schools defined as "high risk"; Chicago's After School Matters works only in high schools, and

not in all of them; New York's TASC operates only where invited and lives within a fixed budget that doesn't stretch to every interested school. But the efforts in the three biggest cities are also designed to complement an already widespread patchwork of other, independent after-school programs in those same locales. These other programs were largely set up by individual schools or nonprofit groups, and the drive for a citywide system was typically meant to encourage and expand on them, not replace them. In short, these efforts demonstrate that it is possible, even in the largest and most complex school districts, to extend the universe of available after-school care significantly, to bring it to previously unserved neighborhoods and schools, and to introduce some elements of a real system: recurring funding, general quality expectations, and centralized support and regulation.

How each locality got to that point — the marshaling of money and political support, the selection of goals, and the designing of a program to fit them — is a separate story. Before delving into the particulars of each of those stories, this overview attempts to draw together some general patterns, themes, and caveats, as a contribution to the still-percolating discussion about how far the universe of local after-school programs can expand.

In the briefest strokes, these four cases and other, related trends seem to justify the following conclusions:

- Large-scale after-school initiatives, though neither universal nor inevitable, are gaining momentum in several cities and, by now, a growing number of states.
- Designing a system to bring after-school services to all, or even most, schools and students is an unfinished and still-daunting enterprise nearly everywhere.
- Still, the early experiences of a few big-city pioneers are now far enough along to provide encouragement, a growing pool of experienced leaders, and some reasonably affordable program models to make the job a bit easier for places that are just starting or have not yet begun.

Funding: Sources and Uses

IN THE 2003-04 ACADEMIC YEAR, the four cities in this study spent between \$979 (San Diego⁴) and \$1,700 (Chicago⁵) to serve an average student in an after-school program for a full year. All of them pay their costs with a combination of federal, state, and local dollars from a wide mix of government programs plus private donations. All of them rely on free use of school buildings (and in Chicago's case, municipal parks, recreation facilities, and pools as well), for which the capital cost is not reflected in the annual budget. The

4 To keep costs comparable, these figures refer to the cost of programs in the afternoon hours only. San Diego's before-school services involve fewer hours and less cost — roughly \$652 per slot per year. A student enrolled in both services for a full year would thus cost \$1,631 to serve (\$652 plus \$979), but that would represent five hours of service a day, not three as in the other cities.

5 Chicago, the only city whose program concentrates on high school students and offers skills training, pays its enrollees an "apprenticeship stipend" for the days they attend. For the sake of comparability, the stipend isn't included in this annual per-student cost. If it were included, it would bring the total to \$2,520.

What all four cities [profiled in this report] have in common is that cost has been a decisive factor in limiting their ambitions for a truly citywide system...

costs associated with keeping the buildings open and usable — items like security, utilities, and custodial and engineering services — normally are included, though these are accounted for differently from place to place. Because each system is governed differently, the costs of management and oversight are reflected differently in the total budget. Sorting out the precise differences from city to city would require a team of auditors, and even then would probably raise as many questions as it answers. The figures are therefore offered as rough estimates, and for the purpose of establishing a range of possible costs, not to present an exact price-tag for any particular kind of service.

What all four cities have in common is that cost has been a decisive factor in limiting their ambitions for a truly citywide system, and has further limited the scope of what they can offer children in an after-school program. Each city has struggled, in different ways and with different results, to limit its ambitions to suit the funds available. San Diego, for example, offers less program enrichment than Los Angeles (at least as measured by “extras” like field trips), but it reaches every school in the city and provides services before school as well as after. New York’s TASC program strictly limits the amount it will provide each school per enrollee, over the occasional objections of nonprofit con-

tractors who would prefer a richer service model. Chicago’s program still reaches a minority of the city’s high schools, and not much more than 10 percent of the student body at a typical school. All four cities have waiting lists, and all but San Diego have unserved schools that they still hope to reach. Each program has had to rein in some aspect of its desired level of service — the number of schools covered, the number of students enrolled at each school, the content of the curriculum, the adult/student ratio, the pay level for participating adults, the number of days or hours of service provided, or some combination of these — to live within the available budget.

At first glance, the idea that limited funding translates into limited service hardly seems remarkable. Yet most discussions treat funding as only one of several obstacles that must be overcome in building citywide after-school systems. The need for space, committed and gifted instructors, an accommodating bureaucracy, top-level political will, and astute management are all cited as factors that can be every bit as limiting as money. Each of the cities in this report has confronted — and still confronts — these other obstacles, all of which remain important. But nearly all of them could be swiftly and substantially larger than they are today if funding *alone* were to

increase significantly. (The one possible exception is Chicago, where the After School Matters program is the newest in this sample, and may already be growing as fast as prudently possible.)

It’s worth noting that although the cost per enrollee varies substantially among these four programs, all of them are far less expensive than some estimates of the complete cost of a high-quality after-school program. To take one example, the Massachusetts advocacy group Parents United for Child Care published a report in 2001 estimating “the costs and components of a high-quality out-of-school-time program” in Boston at \$4,349 per slot per year.⁶ That would include salaries, supplies, equipment, transportation, insurance, rent, and basic administrative costs of a “school-year-only program” — meaning that it would cover 38 weeks of after-school care plus four weeks of full-day care during school breaks and holidays, but not the ten weeks of summer vacation. Significantly, none of the four programs profiled here approaches that many hours of service. At least two of them — Chicago and Los Angeles, for different reasons — specifically distance themselves from the mission of full-time child care in the out-of-school hours. (We discuss, under a separate heading, the factors arguing for and against such a mission.) Nor do most of them achieve or even aspire to

6 Samantha Wechsler, Amy Kershaw, Elaine Fersh, and Andrew Bundy, “Meeting the Challenge: Financing Out-of-School Time Programming in Boston and Massachusetts,” Parents United for Child Care, March 2001, p. 3.

...Pay scales after school run far below those of regular work hours, offer no fringe benefits, and are probably not, by themselves, a main attraction for adults to join the staff.

the 10-to-1 child-to-staff ratio on which it is based.

All four programs rely on space offered to them rent-free from their school systems, and thus do not include the cost of rent in their budget. The Los Angeles Unified School District conservatively estimates the value of rent-free space for LA's BEST at some \$23 million, or an additional \$1,327 per funded slot. But that would still bring the total to \$2,684 per slot, 38 percent lower than the cost projected by Parents United for Child Care. The point is not that the Parents United budget is a suitable goal, or even a realistic one at this stage, merely that there is considerable distance between the actual cost of current large-scale after-school programs and the kind of service that some experts and advocates might wish for.

Apart from the scarcity of money, the other distinguishing feature of funding for after-school programs is that it comes from so many unrelated sources. The programs in this study blend dollars from philanthropic and government programs that are officially designed for seemingly disparate purposes: preventing crime and delinquency (particularly programs of the U.S. Department of Justice); enriching public education (like the 21st Century Community Learning Centers and other programs of federal, state, and local education agencies); promoting employment

and skills training (including many state and local jobs programs and the federal Workforce Investment Act); supporting families and children (social services, child-development, and youth services funds, or the proceeds of the 1998 tobacco settlement); or organizing and developing communities (principally the Community Development Block Grant).

Although virtually no one interviewed for this report believed that after-school programs would someday enjoy a single, dedicated source for most of their funding (few programs of any kind are so lucky), most believed that a true "system" of after-school services would eventually require that this thicket of unrelated programs would have to be simplified and coordinated in some way, at least at the local level. In fact, that appears to be one of the principal virtues of central, citywide initiatives for after-school programs: They are able — with great effort and usually with the backing of powerful officials — to blend dozens of funding sources into a simpler stream, so that individual schools and nonprofit groups can use the money in a consistent way, without having to relate separately to every government program and private donor.

Staffing: The Right Adults, At an Affordable Cost

MOST AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS — including all four of the examples in this report — strive to form a relationship between students and adults that is fundamentally different from the standard student/teacher interaction of the school day. Even the professional teachers who work in after-school programs generally make this point. After a full day of classwork, neither students nor teachers are eager for just a continuation of the same regimen. Most find that a more relaxed routine, in which students are more physically active, work in teams, interact more informally with adults, and mingle fun with learning, is both more productive and more appealing to kids. Especially for older participants — the middle and high school students who can simply opt out of these programs if they aren't satisfied — a program that mixes fun with accomplishment is usually considered essential.

That means finding a front-line staff for after-school programs that can establish a less formal relationship with students and still maintain order, teach skills, keep students' attention focused on the tasks at hand, adhere to schedules, and develop or follow plans for productive and interesting activities. In some schools, it's also a plus if the participating

Not surprisingly...the selection of adult staffers has been the subject of careful attention in each of the four cities we studied.

adults know the community, reflect its ethnic composition, and maintain some relationships with its other institutions and activities outside of school. That has led, in many cases, to the recruitment of parents and other community residents, volunteers and older students, and people with particular skills in, say, the arts or sports. Regular teachers do, in some cases, stay on as after-school instructors. But they are almost always a minority of the staff, usually more highly paid than other employees (though less than in their day jobs), and sometimes serve mainly as consultants, making sure that after-school activities contribute to academic enrichment. In other cases, though, teachers sign on as after-school instructors specifically so they can do something quite different from regular teaching. Many of them regard after-school work as a kind of second career, in which they can exercise talents or interests markedly different from the ones that prevail during the day.

Wages for after-school staff, meanwhile, are generally well below those of professional teachers in normal school hours. Even when full-time teachers do stay on as instructors after school, they usually do so at substantially lower wages and, like nearly all other after-school staffers, they typically receive no fringe benefits for the additional hours.

Although pay scales in after-school programs vary widely, hourly rates hardly ever come close to those for a full-time teacher in a normal school day. In San Diego, for example, teachers working after school generally earn less than three-quarters their daytime rate, and other employees earn well under half (some as little as 20 percent) of what a teacher would make during school hours. In New York City, a small number of teachers work after school at their regular contract rate, but the great majority earn closer to two-thirds that amount.

One slight variation from this pattern is in Chicago, where the after-school apprenticeship programs for high schoolers pay adult leaders a rate (up to \$30 an hour) that can be fairly close to a teacher's hourly wage. That is largely because these adults are recruited not from the parents, neighbors, and youth workers typical of other after-school programs, but more often from the ranks of professional artists, sports trainers, and business tech officials. That choice of faculty no doubt contributes to the program's popularity with high school students, who get a chance to interact with accomplished practitioners in their fields of interest. But even in this case, the wage rate for instructors in Chicago's programs is arguably a good deal lower than these same adults would make at

their regular jobs. Although the amounts are somewhat higher than in other cities, the principle is much the same: Pay scales after school run far below those of regular work hours, offer no fringe benefits, and are probably not, by themselves, a main attraction for adults to join the staff.

Not surprisingly, given the unusual job description, complex requirements, and low pay for after-school personnel, the selection of adult staffers has been the subject of careful attention in each of the four cities we studied. In all but one case, the architects of after-school programs have turned to nonprofit and community groups to help recruit, train, and deploy talented adults from outside the ranks of professional teachers. Many administrators pointed out that the nonprofit groups usually have connections with the kind of adults who would do best in these programs — community-minded, interested in kids, skilled in some relevant field of activity, or better still, all of the above.

Even in the one case where nonprofit groups are not key players, Los Angeles, the administrators of LA's BEST took care to create city job titles for the program that are markedly similar to those in nonprofit youth service organizations. The front-line staff of LA's BEST is also more likely to reflect the race and ethnicity of the students. None of this is an accident. When the program was first

| ...a single locus of control and accountability... is still very rare...

created, its staff drew far more heavily from teachers and school personnel than from parents and community residents. The result, as a top official put it, was a program that was “too tight,” “an extension of the school day.” From that observation came the new staffing regimen, carefully designed to distinguish the program from regular class time and make it more of a middle ground between school and community, work and fun.

Locus of Control and Coordination

EVERY CITY IN THIS REPORT has at least one public agency (or division of an agency) officially responsible for some aspect of after-school programs. Yet only in San Diego does such an office actually govern most of what takes place in after-school programs all over the city. Los Angeles comes close to that level of centralized control, with policy leadership, fundraising, accounting, and external relations handled by an independent nonprofit group that resides in the Mayor’s Office, and with control over program content shared with an operations office located in the Los Angeles Unified School District. In Chicago and New York, leadership is even less central than that, with various responsibilities for funding, regula-

tion, and management divided among multiple city offices and an independent, nonprofit intermediary organization.

The vision of a coherent “system” for after-school services would seem, at least ideally, to call for a single locus of control and accountability. But that is still very rare; the actual arrangements these cities have made are more complicated and, in some cases, less fixed than that, and have no foreseeable plans for becoming neatly centralized or streamlined. One reason for the complexity may be that the multitude of funding sources demands a hybrid organizational structure that isn’t too wedded to the methods and priorities of any one discipline. Being answerable to educators, child care and youth development agencies, employment programs, parks and recreation departments, librarians, and elected officials requires a command of different professional and bureaucratic languages, metrics, and philosophies. It’s surely easier, and may sometimes be necessary, for after-school programs to handle at least some of these relationships through distinct staffs or even separate, affiliated organizations.

But another reason for the divided leadership of many programs has to do with the delicate relationship between “regular” school and after-school: Most organizers of after-school programs (and, it seems, many students in those programs) want them to

be significantly different from the normal school routine — with different kinds of activities and a less formal interaction between adults and children. Virtually every official involved in designing these programs added that after-school programs need to retain at least some independence from the school bureaucracy, which most of them regard as too inflexible and too fixated on academic pursuits, to the exclusion of social, artistic, and recreational ones. And as a practical matter, pay scales in most school systems tend to be considerably higher than a typical after-school program can afford. Every program in this report pays teachers less after school than during the school day, at least in most cases. And most of them draw the majority of their personnel from outside the ranks of full-time teachers, with the non-teacher staff earning even less than the after-school teacher salaries.

Yet after-school programs must take place within school buildings, win cooperation and funding from boards of education and school administrators, and involve at least some rank-and-file school personnel in order to run smoothly. A program run entirely within the school system might have a hard time maintaining a separate identity from the normal routine of the classroom, and might prove too costly. But a program entirely *outside* the schools would require the

One reason for the complexity may be that the multitude of funding sources demands a hybrid organizational structure that isn't too wedded to the methods and priorities of any one discipline.

cooperation of school officials to gain access to the children and buildings, or else would have to move kids from school to other, more expensive space, with the added burden of transportation costs, safety risks, and lost time.

This report deliberately samples four different responses to this difficult balance. At one end of the spectrum is New York's TASC: a completely independent nonprofit organization that blends public and private funding, but that does not have the status of a city program or quasi-public authority. It maintains its relationships with city and school bureaucracies through funding, contracts, and careful diplomacy, not through any executive or legislative mandate. TASC makes grants only to independent community-based organizations working in formal partnership with their respective schools. The nonprofits typically design curricula and recruit and hire non-school employees to give programs a distinct identity, while also using school facilities and resources and accommodating the needs of principals and teachers.

Chicago's After School Matters is more closely woven into the official dealings of city government than is TASC, but it is still a free-standing nonprofit organization. It, too, receives city money through grants and contracts, but its affairs are more directly guided by the heads of

three large city agencies, including the Chicago Public Schools, Park District, and Public Library. All three executives have officially embraced the program and contribute indispensable financial and in-kind support. After School Matters has designed, and often directly operates, a program markedly different from "regular" school, but its relationships with principals and teachers, as well as park officials and librarians, are closely reinforced by a top mayoral aide and the heads of the respective departments.

LA's BEST is likewise governed by a nonprofit organization with mayoral endorsement, but it goes a step further than Chicago: Its "corporate office" is actually resident in the Office of the Mayor, and its "operations office" is technically a separate entity fully incorporated into the school bureaucracy, reporting to an associate superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District (though both the chief of operations and the associate superintendent see themselves as "beachheads" for a looser, more creative culture within that bureaucracy). Los Angeles' dual leadership structure is the most literal example of the school/non-school balancing act that we found, with the school system hosting the program's operating functions but decisions on program content made in cooperation with a separate corporate office.

San Diego alone seems to have resolved these tensions by creating one locus of responsibility nestled securely within a single hierarchy of city government. Significantly, that command center is part of the city's Department of Community and Economic Development, not any of the local school districts. That is partly the result of the peculiar jurisdictional boundaries of the city's school system. The San Diego Unified School District is the largest, but far from the only, school authority operating within San Diego's city limits. Because San Diego's "6 to 6" program was created by the city to serve every elementary and middle school in the city, it necessarily has to work with all nine districts that have schools within its borders. But the program's location in the Community and Economic Development Department is not just an accident of jurisdictional boundaries. It is also a matter of mission and philosophy: Of the four programs we studied, it is the only one that primarily and explicitly sets out to serve working parents and their children as a prime *raison d'être*. This raises an important question that, intentionally or not, ended up shaping and distinguishing each of these programs as they set about defining their purposes and methods: Who is this program mainly *for*?

...the relative weight a program assigns to one constituency or another inevitably influences what services that program will offer, to whom, on what schedule.

Defining the ‘Customer’

IT WOULD BE SIMPLISTIC, of course, to imagine any after-school program (or any government system, for that matter) serving only a single constituency to the exclusion of all others. Yet the relative weight a program assigns to one constituency or another inevitably influences what services that program will offer, to whom, on what schedule. All of the programs in this report offer benefits to parents, students, teachers, school administrators, youth agencies and, indirectly, even the juvenile justice system. All of those are “customers” of after-school programs to one degree or another. But each of the four initiatives was conceived with a subset of those constituencies in mind, and that emphasis has determined, to a striking degree, what the program contains, how it is governed, when it operates, and how it is to be evaluated.

San Diego’s program was born from a realization that, by the mid 1990s, working parents were trusting the safety of their children to an after-school activity that was originally meant solely as a recreational embellishment, not as full-time child care. Faced with an epidemic of gangs and youth crime — from which parents were clearly trying to protect their kids in the only way available — city officials responded with a fundamentally new approach to the out-of-school

hours of a regular work day. The “6 to 6” program offers the same menu of activities as most of the other after-school programs we studied: homework help, arts, group projects, recreation, and so on. But its schedule is designed for the working parent, with service in the morning as well as afternoon, and on those troublesome half days when the regular school session ends early. Children’s safety in the out-of-school hours was a cornerstone of the program, as it was in Los Angeles. But in San Diego, the issue was specifically defined as children’s safety *during parents’ work hours*.

By contrast, LA’s BEST was born directly from alarm over juvenile crime, the young victims of crime, and the general dangers of idle time on the streets, particularly during the afternoon and early evening hours when youth crime measurably spikes. For LA’s BEST, the initial “customers” (at least as conceived by Mayor Tom Bradley, the program’s prime mover) were endangered young people and, as a close second, the neighborhood residents and businesses who might otherwise be prey to youth crime. The early morning hours aren’t a crucial part of that anticrime calculation and don’t figure in the program design of LA’s BEST. Nor do the specific concerns of working parents. Asked about service during non-school days and half days, or

at other times when employed parents need child care, the program’s executive director acknowledged the need and the importance of the issues, but drew a clear boundary between her program’s mission and these other concerns.

In New York, TASC similarly recognizes the child-care needs of working parents and welcomes the extra efforts of some providers in its program to serve those needs. But TASC neither mandates nor funds extended service in the morning, on non-school days, or on half days. In TASC’s case, the question is not one of mission but of funding and priorities. The top priority for the New York initiative is to win the support of city and state governments — and especially their school officials — for universal after-school services. That means demonstrating that such services can be offered at low cost with quality content, and with benefits that translate into improved school performance. Serving the child-care needs of working parents in morning hours and on non-school days would be a welcome plus for TASC, but not its top priority. As a result, when some local programs make an extra effort to serve kids outside TASC’s normal hours, they have to raise funds for that effort on their own.

Chicago’s program is unique in this line-up because its main “customer” is teenagers, an age group not likely to want

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a five-day-a-week program, and not normally a prominent part of the child-care market. Operating three days a week, After School Matters is not a full-time solution for working parents, nor is it meant to be. Nor is it primarily a service to schools and teachers, given that it doesn't prominently include services like homework help that teachers and principals often favor. But by focusing on high school students, a group that other after-school programs tend to shun, and giving them an opportunity to develop skills and demonstrate leadership, After School Matters performs an indirect service to parents, teachers, and others who worry about teenagers without having much to offer them beyond the school day.

None of these programs was designed for just one "customer," and this discussion isn't meant to simplify the many purposes they serve. In truth, beyond the driving forces mentioned, all of the programs also sought to enrich and broaden the educational experience of children, with the hope of improving academic performance. The point, rather, is to illustrate the relationship between the design of the initiative and the main needs it addresses. Those needs normally were identified at the time each initiative was conceived, usually by a prominent individual facing particular concerns or pressures of the moment, who took the critical first step in

creating the program. Comparing the interests, constituencies, and political styles of those first actors is another way of viewing the similarities and differences of the programs in this study.

The 'Prime Movers'

LA'S BEST WAS THE BRAIN CHILD of Mayor Tom Bradley, and Chicago's After School Matters was instigated, in major part, by Maggie Daley, with firm support from her husband, Mayor Richard M. Daley. Both initiatives continue to bear the stamp of those mayors' overriding concerns (gangs and youth crime for Mayor Bradley, and idle, neglected teenagers for the Daleys). San Diego's program was conceived by Mayor Susan Golding, but with a powerful assist from a coalition of religious groups called the San Diego Organizing Project. In that case, unique among the cities in this study, the impetus for after-school programs drew much of its momentum from organized public pressure, as well as from a mayoral initiative. Still, all three efforts stemmed from chief executives with strong personal feelings on the subject of after-school services, and a willingness to adopt the issue as a personal hallmark. Only in New York City did the after-school initiative come from outside local government. But there, the prime

mover was still a powerful institution and leader with a clear point of view: the Open Society Institute, led by financier philanthropist George Soros.

All four stories therefore start with a mandate from someone with influence, money, and a "bully pulpit" from which to woo partners, solicit other funders, appoint initial implementers, and track results. It would be virtually impossible to conceive of any of these large-scale programs taking shape without such a high-profile inventor/champion. To illustrate the point, consider the myriad other after-school programs in these same cities that are not part of the initiatives studied here. All but one of these cities (San Diego) is home to many other after-school programs conceived by expert minds and run by experienced organizations. Many have flourished and grown; several have been favorably evaluated in one way or another. But none of them has reached the scale or public prominence of the four initiatives on this list. And the main reason for that appears to be the galvanizing power of the prime movers.

Still, having a powerful sponsor or patron is not the same as having a stable system. Mayors can create programs, but not compel their successors to sustain those programs. Even during their tenures, mayors almost never command enough money (or, in most cases, enough

The “prime movers” in these stories are important...because they reached out effectively to other centers of power on which that system would depend.

authority) to create an after-school regimen by fiat. The “prime movers” in these stories are important not just because they embraced after-school programs and worked hard to create a sustainable system, but also because they reached out effectively to other centers of power on which that system would depend. Thus the mayor of Los Angeles determined to establish a partnership with the independent School District to operate LA’s BEST. Chicago’s mayor and first lady started by forming a three-way partnership of the school, park, and library systems — distinct bureaucracies separated by longstanding rivalries that only a deft exercise of mayoral statesmanship could reconcile. The mayor of San Diego, supported by the advocacy of religious groups, enlisted the cooperation of no fewer than nine independent public school districts, seven private school operators, and nine community-based service providers to make the “6 to 6” program reach every school in the city.

In New York, the process is inverted, yet the point is strikingly similar. There, instead of starting with a mayoral embrace, the TASC initiative set out to *entice* the mayor, the governor, and their respective legislative branches and school systems to support a citywide after-school system. It is not yet clear whether that effort will succeed. But it is virtually cer-

tain that it would not even have begun without a sponsor of the international stature of George Soros to put credibility behind the search for partners and money. (Another example of personal prominence dedicated to the pursuit of universal after-school services was the case of then-movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger, who personally championed the California after-school initiative that became Proposition 49. In that case, however, Schwarzenegger later went on to win the state’s chief executive office, and thus to buttress personal salesmanship with official authority.) In New York, as elsewhere, it is possible to find excellent after-school programs that are not sponsored by Soros or TASC. But none of them had any realistic chance of becoming the basis of a citywide system, nor any express intent of doing so. Only with an extraordinary \$125 million grant and the very public endorsement of George Soros’ foundation was TASC able to build a network of service in New York that is big enough to command the official attention (if not yet the full assent) of city and state decision-makers.

It is worth noting that all four of these initiatives deliberately avoided a protracted planning and coalition-building process, preferring instead to get started quickly and build support and enhancements as they grew. This is no doubt partly the

result of the already-powerful people and forces standing behind the new initiatives. When a new effort bears the official stamp of the mayor of Chicago or, in Los Angeles, the combined authority of the mayor and the superintendent of schools, in the face of a clear and widely accepted need, there may be little necessity for broad coalition-building and public education. All of these initiatives did begin with some amount of *operational* planning or preparation, but generally lasting only a few weeks or months — long enough to organize the fiscal and administrative structure of the program, set priorities, and launch pilot projects. In all four cases, public support, new streams of funding, and a circle of collaborating organizations gradually formed and grew as the early stages of implementation were in progress. One participant in Chicago’s program went so far as to predict that “if we had really gotten serious about planning this thing in advance, and if we’d found out ahead of time all the complications and issues we were going to face, we’d *still* be planning, and thousands of kids would have finished school without ever seeing this program.”

Evaluation: What Constitutes Success?

IN THE FALL OF 2002, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's After School Project, which commissioned this paper, published a report to the after-school field that raised the following question:

Is it reasonable, at this stage, to measure after-school activity by whether it boosts academic performance, cuts crime, improves health, strengthens neighborhood cohesion, promotes parental involvement in schools, and advances half a dozen other worthwhile goals? All these claims appear here and there in the literature of this field, and each of them has some reasonable basis in theory and practice. Taken together, however, they seem to promise too much too fast.

All of the projects in this report are the subjects of evaluations, either in progress or completed, that illustrate the breadth of purposes that after-school programs are expected to address. None of them is quite as wide-ranging as the rhetorical question just quoted, but taken together, they do describe a universe of goals and ambitions nearly that broad.

The most complete evaluation so far is that of LA's BEST, conducted by the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation

and summarized in a final report dated June 2000. It found that the program contributed to parents' and children's feelings of increased safety after school, to students' motivation and enthusiasm for school, to their aspirations for finishing school and going on to college, and to improvements in school attendance and academic performance that were directly proportional to the degree of their participation in LA's BEST's programs. The evaluation took particular note of this last point, acknowledging that "[t]he fact that we can detect *any* change on standardized achievement measures in itself is notable, for most educational interventions are unable to show impact on measures not tightly tied to the curriculum."⁷ In this case, the evaluation included safety, motivation, and student achievement, and found encouraging results in all three categories.

Evaluations of San Diego's "6 to 6" Program, conducted by the evaluation firm Hoffman and Clark, found some reason to believe that the program may be contributing to an improvement in reading and math scores, though the reports did not include comparisons with a control group. The evaluation found "6 to 6" to be popular with parents, principals, teachers, and kids, and just as safe as licensed child care programs for school-age youngsters. The program's organizers and San Diego's former police

chief separately cite strong circumstantial evidence that the program may have contributed to a drop in after-school crime.

In New York City, preliminary reports in TASC's evaluation, which is still under way, have found that participation in the program is associated with rising rates of school attendance and widespread improvement in math scores, compared with a similar group of non-participants. Fuller findings, due in the 2004-05 school year, will measure other effects on student achievement as well as the characteristics of students who enroll, the program's ability to attract and retain good staff and managers, its relations with schools and neighborhoods, and the satisfaction of parents, principals, and senior school officials.

After School Matters, the newest of these programs, is still in the early stage of its evaluation plans, though research by the Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago has found strong evidence that the program is popular with students and that they value the apprenticeships both as a way of acquiring skills and as a way of spending rewarding time with adults. Effects of the program on students' performance in and out of school and the consequences of different types of program activity still remain to be studied.

The subjects of all these evaluations are

⁷ Denise Huang, Barry Gibbons, Kyung Sun Kim, Charlotte Lee, and Eva L. Baker, "A Decade of Results: The Impact of LA's BEST After-school Enrichment Program on Subsequent Student Achievement and Performance," UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation (CSE), Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, June 2000, p. 9.

Boosting reading and math scores, keeping children and neighborhoods safer, contributing to young peoples' social development and behavior, and building bridges between the child care and education systems — all...are worthwhile goals...

reasonably well connected with the particular purposes and designs of their respective programs. But taken together, as the After School Project suggested in 2002, they do represent an especially wide range of goals and visions. Boosting reading and math scores, keeping children and neighborhoods safer, contributing to young peoples' social development and behavior, and building bridges between the child care and education systems — all of these are worthwhile goals, maybe even achievable ones. But together, they form a soberingly long list, on which the odds of a few discouraging findings will surely be high.

It will be important, as evaluation results begin to pile up, for programs to note that each of these various goals is logically plausible and certainly desirable, but achieving *all* of them is not necessary for justifying universal after-school services. It would be enough, as one principal said to us, “for kids to have a safe place to spend time after school, do their homework, have a little fun, and not have to have their minds ground into dust by TV. If we just do that — or better still, if we expose them to music or dance, give them a chance to work in teams or get some exercise — we’ve accomplished something that most parents and schools really value. Do we have to show with statistics that we also raised their math

scores? That would be great, but I’m not staying up nights worrying about it.”

Unfortunately, some of those charged with administering the new funding streams for after-school programming do find it necessary to justify the continued existence and growth of these funds on the basis of their direct effect on grades and standardized tests. Evaluation reports done after only one or two years and disclosing little or no such impact have been used to question the utility of these programs and to cut their funding.

Conclusion: Order Out of Chaos

MOST OF THIS DISCUSSION has amounted to a compare-and-contrast exercise involving four very different efforts to bring after-school services to a large percentage of local students. Yet it’s important not to lose sight of a crucial unifying theme linking these disparate stories: *The needs of schools, elected officials, community organizations, students, neighborhoods, and parents (especially, but not exclusively, employed parents) are increasingly converging around a demand for some form of extended school day.*

The relationships among these various interests, their level of involvement or leadership in any given initiative, and their potential for greater involvement

later all vary from place to place. And in any given place, the fact that the various interests are converging is far from enough to ensure that a functioning system will result. Available money and other resources are still not great enough to translate even the strongest of these alliances into a truly universal after-school system. And in a climate of straitened budgets in federal, state, and local governments at the start of the 21st century, the odds that such resources will grow dramatically are probably slim. Yet despite the discouraging fiscal picture and the difficulty of organizing new social systems of any kind, the news in this report is not that these initiatives are still fragile. The news is that they are happening.

A second possible headline for this story, though more tentative, is that the four initiatives are actually more similar to one another than they might at first appear. Most of them depend heavily on community-based nonprofit groups working in partnership with schools to offer a program that meets the needs of both kids and educators, blending academic content and constructive, creative fun. All of them get a good portion of their basic necessities — their facilities and some of their funding, at a minimum — from the school system. Nearly all piece the rest of their income together from essentially the same sources: grants

...but achieving all [these various goals] is not necessary for justifying universal after-school services.

from the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, city tax levies, dollars from youth development and social-service programs, and general federal support from programs like the Community Development and Social Services Block Grants.

None of this yet constitutes a pattern or blueprint that other cities can simply adopt and follow. Each initiative in this report went through a laborious, sometimes painful, growth process that was not made materially easier by the existence of precedents elsewhere. Much of the process still depends on exigencies of politics, administrative control, jurisdictional boundaries, and fiscal circumstances that vary starkly from city to city. And even in Los Angeles, among the earliest pioneers of big after-school programs, a senior administrator writes that “the security of this partnership [between city government and the independent School District] is entirely dependent upon the priorities of the mayor and superintendent” — though the same official adds that LA’s BEST “has been a priority for three successive mayors and five superintendents,” and has attained the status of a “sacred cow.”

In short, even if none of these cities can yet claim to have a universal after-school “system” on a par with their police, school, or water systems, neither

can their after-school activity be thought of as merely a hodgepodge of independent efforts with no gravitational core. By now, both organizationally and politically, there is something to each of these initiatives that is more routine, better supported, and more important to individual citizens and voters than after-school programs have tended to be in the past. That can still unravel, but it is a more durable achievement than seemed at all likely just a decade ago.

Acknowledgments

With the After-School Corporation

New York, New York

www.tascorp.org

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With After School Matters

Chicago, Illinois

www.afterschoolmatters.org

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Other Sources in Chicago

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Mary A. Dempsey, Chicago Public Library
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Arne Duncan, Chicago Public Schools

With LA's BEST

Los Angeles, California

www.lasbest.org

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With San Diego's "6 to 6"

San Diego, California

www.sandiego.gov/6to6

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About the After School Project

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION created the After School Project in 1998 as a five-year, three-city demonstration aimed at connecting significant numbers of young people in low-income neighborhoods with responsible adults during out-of-school time. To that end, the Project focuses on developing: (1) consistent, dedicated revenues to support after school programs in low-income communities; (2) an array of developmental opportunities for youth, including physical activity and sports, educational, social, and recreational programs; and (3) strong local organizations with the necessary resources, credibility, and political clout to bring focus and visibility to the youth development field.

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