HOURS OF OPPORTUNITY

VOLUME 3

Profiles of Five Cities Improving After-School Programs Through a Systems Approach

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Preface

High-quality out-of-school-time (OST) programs, which for the purposes here include after-school and summer programs, have the potential to help children and youth succeed and develop to their fullest potential. However, the out-of-school-time systems that provide such programs in U.S. cities still suffer from fragmentation and lack of coordination. The result is often poor access and poor quality for those most in need of these services. In an effort to spur the creation of citywide systems of high-quality OST programs, The Wallace Foundation established an out-of-school learning initiative to fund OST system-building efforts in five cities: Boston, Chicago, New York City, Providence, and Washington, D.C. All the sites were established with the following goals:

- Increase access to and participation in OST programs.
- Improve the quality of OST programs.
- Build an information, technology, and communication infrastructure to facilitate better management and support for OST programs.
- Work toward sustaining OST programs and the systems designed to support them.

In January 2008, The Wallace Foundation asked the RAND Corporation to document the progress of these cities toward their goals and to examine the development and use of management information systems to track participation. This report presents detailed findings from the case studies that were conducted to document the progress of Wallace-funded cities toward their system goals. Two companion publications, *Hours of Opportunity*, Volume 1: *Lessons from Five Cities on Building Systems to Improve After-School, Summer School, and Other Out-of-School-Time Programs* (Bodilly et al., 2010) and *Hours of Opportunity*, Volume 2: *The Power of Data to Improve After-School Programs Citywide* (McCombs et al., 2010), focus on the cities' early planning efforts and their progress toward improved access and quality, use of information systems, and greater sustainment and their use of management information systems, respectively.

The findings of the study and the case studies presented in this report should be of interest to policymakers and practitioners involved in improving OST services, especially at the city level.

This research was conducted by RAND Education, a unit of the RAND Corporation.

The research sponsor, The Wallace Foundation, seeks to support and share effective ideas and practices to improve learning and enrichment opportunities for children. Its current objectives are to improve the quality of schools, primarily by developing and placing effective principals in high-need schools; improve the quality of and access to out-of-school-time programs

through coordinated city systems and by strengthening the financial management skills of providers; integrate in- and out-of-school learning by supporting efforts to reimagine and expand learning time during the traditional school day and year as well as during the summer months, helping expand access to arts learning, and using technology as a tool for teaching and promoting creativity and imagination. For more information and research on these and related topics, please visit The Wallace Foundation Knowledge Center at www.wallacefoundation.org.

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Summary

High-quality out-of-school-time (OST) programs, which for our purposes include both after-school and summer learning programs, have been shown to positively affect youth development and reduce negative behaviors. At the same time, the provision of OST programming in urban centers has been criticized for poor quality and lack of access for those most in need of services. In response, The Wallace Foundation sponsored an initiative in 2003 to help five cities develop better coordinating mechanisms to reduce OST fragmentation, redundancy, and inefficiency and to increase access and quality. The Wallace Foundation first provided each site with a planning grant to support the development of a business plan. After The Foundation approved a site's plan, the site received its implementation grant. The initiative began with a planning grant to Providence, Rhode Island, in 2003, followed by grants to New York City, Boston, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. The Foundation's funds were to be used for cross-agency and within-agency planning and coordination to meet the initiative's goals. In 2008, The Foundation asked RAND to assess the progress of the five sites.

Purpose of This Study

The RAND study, carried out from January 2008 to May 2009, had two interrelated parts. The first, reported in *Hours of Opportunity*, Volume 1: *Lessons from Five Cities on Building Systems to Improve After-School, Summer School, and Other Out-of-School-Time Programs* (Bodilly et al., 2010), was to describe the sites' work under the grant and to analyze the conditions and activities that contributed to their progress in building a coordinated system of services that would meet the initiative's goals: increasing access, improving quality, developing and using information for decisionmaking, and planning for sustainability. The second part of the study, reported in *Hours of Opportunity*, Volume 2: *The Power of Data to Improve After-School Programs Citywide* (McCombs et al., 2010), involved a detailed analysis of the cities' progress in building and implementing management information systems to track student enrollment and attendance, including—but not limited to—The Wallace Foundation grantees. This report supplements the two other publications in the series by providing in-depth case studies of the Wallace-funded cities, including a profile of local context, each city's work under the planning grant, the overall goals of the effort, each city's work in the implementation phase, and enablers and challenges to implementation.

The overall study addressed the following research questions:

1. What decisions did sites make about approaches to improving OST systems during the early phases of the initiative? What drove these decisions?
2. What progress did sites make toward increasing access, improving quality, using data-based decisionmaking, and improving sustainability?
3. How did collaboration and coordination enable progress? What other enablers were important?

Approach

To answer the research questions, we used a qualitative, replicated case-study approach in which the unit of analysis was the citywide, multiorganizational initiative funded by The Wallace Foundation. The study provided a descriptive analysis of the activities that the sites undertook and the conditions that led to progress toward each city's specific goals (under the broader Wallace initiative goals). The analysis involved examining the data for similarities and differences among the sites and identifying themes concerning the factors that enabled or hindered sites' progress toward their goals.

We conducted a literature review of collaborative interagency reform efforts in the OST and other social service sectors to help us understand the types of mechanisms that the sites might use to promote system building. This review supported the development of interview protocols and guided data analysis. The main themes from the literature were as follows:

- The development of citywide approaches among multiple organizations can be challenging.
- Although coordination is desirable for efficiency and other reasons, it may be difficult to achieve in the absence of political will or sufficient resources.
- Interagency coordination or collaboration to improve systems may be slow to develop, fragile, and difficult to sustain over time.
- Factors known to influence the success of initiatives include leadership capability, sufficient and capable staffing, buy-in from major stakeholders, public support, communication among stakeholders, funding, and city context.
- Success may depend on the emergence of leaders who use unifying techniques to ensure buy-in and coordination among the organizations and key managers involved in the effort.

The literature also revealed a number of activities in which sites might engage to varying degrees: (1) conducting a needs assessment; (2) building shared goals; (3) consolidating or developing more coordinated structures and roles; (3) coordinating among groups; (4) planning for and implementing coordinated activities; (6) developing, analyzing, and sharing information; (7) communicating with the public and stakeholders; and (8) addressing the need for incentives, rules, and supports.

We gathered documentation from each case-study site (e.g., grant proposals, planning documents, and memoranda), interviewed 152 key staff in relevant organizations (e.g., the mayor's office, school district, state and city agencies, providers, funders), and conducted a survey of providers regarding their use of management information (MI) systems.

Our primary goal was to track and describe the sites' activities and the challenges and enablers they faced in the process. To determine where sites started and what their intentions were (research question 1), we reviewed statements made in initial proposals and business plans concerning each of the four expectation categories: improving access and participation, improving quality, developing MI systems, and developing and implementing plans for financial sustainability.

To determine the cities' progress (research question 2) and the factors that enabled progress (question 3), we collected data on activities during the grant and records of accomplishments, examined documents, and conducted interviews. We conducted two rounds of interviews, the first in spring 2008 and the second in spring 2009. To gather information on providers' use of MI systems, we developed and administered a 20-minute survey (final sample = 358 providers) that covered the following topics and constructs drawn from the literature: frequency of data entry, MI system training, technical support, leadership, buy-in, usability of the system, use of data, usefulness of data, and perceived validity of the collected data.

Findings

Providence

Prior to the Wallace initiative, no city agency provided or funded OST programs or was dedicated to youth development. Because there was no city agency or organization focused on OST, Rhode Island Kids Count, a statewide nonprofit, helped coordinate the planning process and engaged all stakeholders in significant fact-based review of what existed and what was most needed. The planning year resulted in a decision to focus on middle school programming, and an intermediary agency called Providence After School Alliance (PASA) was formed to lead the system-building effort. Heads of several city agencies, such as the Providence Police Department and the Providence Public Schools, sat in on its steering committee meetings (and later its board meetings), which were chaired by the mayor.

The planning grant promised to create neighborhood campuses, called AfterZones, to provide middle school youth with after-school activities at their schools and other community locations. Each AfterZone was overseen by a coordinator and several site-based staff. The intermediary was to develop a management information system to track students during program hours, develop and implement quality standards and a self-assessment tool for providers, obtain funding to sustain the effort, and ensure access for all middle school children who wanted services.

In Providence, the AfterZones offered after-school opportunities to all middle school students, and approximately 34 percent of the students participated—an increase from about 500 to 1,700 slots. PASA developed and adopted quality standards, which were being used across the entire state, and provided professional development for providers. PASA helped secure federal 21st Century Community Learning Center funds to support the AfterZones, and, with direct help from the mayor, had been successful in bringing in many private donations to support system building and programs. Data on participation were used in daily decisionmaking, to inform planning, and to help garner additional funding for the efforts. Building on the success of the AfterZones, PASA was beginning to support system-building efforts at the high school level.

New York City

Prior to the Wallace initiative, New York City had a sprawling array of providers under a large number of city agencies that did little to coordinate with each other. Two very active intermediary organizations received city funding: The AfterSchool Corporation and Partnership for After School Education. During the planning grant, a city-led review of city-contracted services for high-need youth led to the consolidation of many programs and funds into the city's Department of Youth and Child Development (DYCD). And to ensure further coordination across the many city agencies, the mayor appointed a special adviser with delegated mayoral power to increase coordination across the agencies. As part of the planning process, the city used market research and data analysis to identify underserved locations, and, subsequently, the implementation grant focused on providing better programs across all age levels in high-need areas of the city. DYCD developed a new contract process for providers and vendors to encourage more programs in high-need areas and promoted quality by providing free professional development to OST providers. It also adopted additional strategies to increase access and enrollment, including improved coordination with the schools and additional information for the public. All interviewees familiar with this initial effort emphasized the important role of the mayor's special adviser in ensuring the cooperation of other agencies, holding regular and productive meetings, and creating specific memoranda of understanding to document agreements among the agencies.

Over the course of the initiative, DYCD moved programming to high-need areas and expanded the number of available slots from 45,000 to more than 80,000. It established quality standards and monitored providers as part of the contract system. In addition, DYCD provided free professional development to all funded providers. It required the providers to enter program and participation data into an MI system. Data from this system were used to hold providers accountable for participation, signal potential quality issues, and help garner additional funding for OST programming. In addition, New York City's sustainment plan aimed to use participation and evaluation data to prove the benefits of OST programming and increase city support in a competitive funding environment.

Boston

In the planning year, the OST field in Boston included two intermediary organizations, Build the Out-of-School Time Network (BOSTnet) and Boston After School and Beyond (Boston Beyond), and the city provided funding primarily through the community centers that operated under the Boston Centers for Youth and Families. Boston Beyond led the planning grant because of its potential for leadership in the sector and the participation of the mayor and other key city leaders on its board. In the planning period, leaders soon focused on using the grant to enhance an existing initiative of the Boston Public Schools called Partners for Student Success (PSS). This initiative focused on a small number of low-performing elementary schools and was intended to offer a full-service model of supports, including significantly increased afterschool programming, to turn performance around. The plan called for PSS to be piloted in five schools in the first year, and it expanded to five additional schools in each subsequent year of the Wallace grant (15 schools total). The initiative included school-, program-, and system-level strategies. At the school level, a manager of extended learning services (MELS) would be located in each of the 15 schools to coordinate the school-level effort. The program-level strategy called for offering professional development to providers to strengthen services. At the system level, the goal was to institutionalize the PSS approach across the city and the school

system. A coordinated information system and evaluation were to support the initiative. The implementation grant was given to Boston Beyond, with the mayor's support, to implement the model by helping coordinate the work of the MELS, offering professional development for providers to improve their services, and building a coordinated information system.

During the first two years of the grant, Boston Beyond faced a number of staffing changes, including the resignation of its executive director, which delayed implementation. Further, there were many leadership changes in the various city agencies—the superintendent, the head of the Department of Human Services, and the police commissioner, all of whom were ex-officio members of the Boston Beyond board. The PSS demonstration occurred in only ten schools rather than the 15 planned demonstration schools. In spring 2008, The Foundation asked Boston to resubmit an implementation plan, and it developed a new business plan that included the active participation of the mayor's office, the superintendent's office, the Department of Extended Learning Time, Afterschool, and Services (DELTAS, a small agency in the public school system), Boston Beyond, and other key city agencies. The new business plan placed the PSS sites into the DELTAS Triumph Collaborative, a group of Boston public schools that shared an OST model that was similar to that of the PSS schools, including full-time on-site coordinators who were supported by the DELTAS. Thus, in the 2008–2009 school year, work under the grant expanded to include all Triumph Collaborative schools (42 schools in total, including the PSS schools), and the DELTAS office assumed operational responsibility for implementing the initiative.

After-school program participation increased in the PSS schools; five of these schools did not have an OST program prior to the demonstration. In 2008, 927 students were enrolled in after-school programs across the ten PSS sites. In 2009, DELTAS provided professional development and coaching to after-school program staff and principals at all schools in the Triumph Collaborative. It also evaluated quality using a set of standards and rubrics. The MI system was in development, and there were no changes in how OST was funded or how funding could be sustained.

Chicago

Prior to the Wallace initiative, Chicago's OST provision was sponsored by four major city agencies and a highly regarded, nationally recognized high school OST organization, After School Matters. The mayor's wife, the director of After School Matters, led the planning grant process, which used a steering committee structure that included the major OST organizations and was supported by several University of Chicago professors.

In Chicago, the grant was intended to improve coordination across city agencies and, especially, to fund projects that the agencies would not otherwise fund. Five strategies were outlined: build and implement MI systems to track OST programs and participation and provide the systems to all OST partners and providers, develop and implement a communication plan to target teens, disseminate best practices across providers, pilot a consistent way to measure and ensure OST quality, and develop strategies for long-term sustainment. The effort was housed in the Department of Children and Youth Services (which later became Family and Support Services) with a multiagency committee set up to coordinate the grant activities. Early activities focused on developing a management information system for each major OST-funding agency. The hope was that, by working together on this endeavor, the agencies would find ways to cooperate on the other significant improvements needed, especially focusing on

improving programming for teens, who appeared to be underserved compared to elementary-level children.

All the major public agencies in Chicago had a functional MI system, and, in spring 2009, data from all agencies had been merged into a single data set that allowed agencies to look at data across the entire OST system. Chicago had established a quality pilot that was under way in 43 sites, and the Chicago Public Library had led an active teen campaign to improve teen participation. There was no change in how OST was funded or how funding could be sustained.

Washington, D.C.

In Washington, D.C., the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (the Trust), a public-private venture founded in 1999, acted as an intermediary between the city agencies and community-based organization (CBO) providers and advocated for improved funding and programming. In addition, many city agencies provided services to youth, including the Family Court, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Health, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the D.C. Public Library, and the Metropolitan Police Department. The Trust led the planning process in Washington, D.C.

Market research identified a lack of programming for and participation among middle school youth, which led the Trust to propose the creation of high-quality OST programming in five middle schools, with on-site coordinators to achieve better coordination and alignment. The model would be scaled-up to other middle schools after the demonstration period. The proposed supporting infrastructure for the citywide system had three elements: an MI system to track enrollment and attendance, a system for applying and improving standards through training, and a communication strategy. In the long term, the plan called for sustainment through absorption into the city budget.

At the beginning of the implementation grant, in the early days of a new city administration, the city council passed legislation that brought the schools under mayoral control and established the Interagency Collaboration and Services Integration Commission (ICSIC). Staff of the Trust and other government agencies were asked to sit on this commission and to collaboratively plan and coordinate OST provision and other youth services for the city. The legislation moved the focus of coordinated activities away from the intermediary and toward more centralized governmental planning through ICSIC.

In the final year of the grant, as a result of ICSIC's decisions, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) undertook a concerted and unprecedented effort to improve OST provision in the city's public schools. Using the model developed by the Trust under the grant, DCPS moved to open the schools to CBOs during after-school hours, began a process to vet CBOs, and placed coordinators in each school to work with the CBOs, principals, teachers, and parents to improve services. The school-based coordinator model developed by the Trust was implemented across the district.

In spring 2009, Washington, D.C., had OST programming in all its public schools, and each school had an on-site OST coordinator, funded by the school system. The Trust and the school system continued to use their own MI systems to track participation. The mayor called on the schools, the Trust, and other agencies to regularly report on programs and participation.

Acknowledgments

Many individuals contributed to this report. We thank the sponsor of the work, The Wallace Foundation, for its interest in and support of this work. In particular, we thank Zakia Redd, Ann Stone, and Ed Pauly of The Foundation's evaluation team and Nancy Devine, Sheila Murphy, and Dara Rose of the communities team, all of whom provided important feedback that improved the content of this report.

We are particularly grateful for the cooperation and support provided by each of the cities in the study—Boston, Chicago, New York City, Providence, and Washington, D.C. Our respondents' willingness to share their successes and challenges in this area will aid other cities in their efforts to improve OST program provision. Reviews by city agency and intermediary staff also improved the accuracy and presentation of this report. Finally, we are indebted to all the individuals who participated in the study and shared their valuable time and insights with us.

This project would not have been completed without the assistance of many other RAND colleagues, including Vicki Park, Bing Han, Melissa Bradley, Dahlia Lichter, and Kate Giglio.

Abbreviations

ACS	New York City Administration for Children's Services
ASM	After School Matters
BCYF	Boston Centers for Youth and Families
BEST	Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers
BOSTnet	Build the Out-of-School Time Network
BPS	Boston Public Schools
CBO	community-based organization
CLI	Boston Community Learning Initiative
CPL	Chicago Public Library
CPS	Chicago Public Schools
CYS	Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services
DCPS	District of Columbia Public Schools
DELTAS	Boston Public Schools Department of Extended Learning Time, Afterschool, and Services
DELTAS MIS	DELTAS management information system
DOE	New York City Department of Education
DYCD	New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
FSS	Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
FY	fiscal year
ICSIC	Interagency Collaboration and Services Integration Commission
MELS	manager of extended learning services
MI	management information
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NYCHA	New York City Housing Authority

NYSAN	New York State Afterschool Network
OST	out-of-school time
PASA	Providence After School Alliance
PASE	Partnership for After School Education
PiQ	Program Improvement and Quality Protocol
PMT	Project My Time
PPSD	Providence Public School District
PQA	HighScope Program Quality Assessment
PSS	Partners for Student Success
PUCC	Parents United for Child Care
RFP	request for proposals
RIPQA	Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment
SAYO	Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes
SES	Supplemental Education Service
TASC	The After School Corporation

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Youth (grades kindergarten through 12) across the United States participate in publicly supported, out-of-school-time (OST) programs in group settings after school hours and in summertime.[1] Such programs include simple after-school care services to support working parents, programs specifically structured to help reduce problem behaviors, programs that reinforce academic achievement, and programs that offer access to sports, arts, crafts, and other activities. Local service providers may be a combination of community-based organizations (CBOs), city and school district agencies, and intermediary organizations. The collection of OST providers and funders in a city can often be fragmented and uncoordinated, however (Bodilly and Beckett, 2005; Halpern, 2006).

Recent studies indicate that high-quality, well-managed and -structured OST opportunities can help youth develop critical academic, social, and emotional attributes and skills, especially if offered consistently and persistently over time (Lauer et al., 2006; Bodilly and Beckett, 2005). This research has drawn attention to whether publicly supported programs meet these conditions and whether they are effective avenues for youth development. In particular, cities are attempting to improve the access and quality of programs to ensure that more youth have the opportunity to achieve the results associated with the most effective programs.

Foundation Goals and Expectations

To further promote effective provision, The Wallace Foundation decided to fund an out-of-school learning initiative to help five cities (Providence, New York City, Boston, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.) develop and test ways to plan and implement coordinated OST programming that, ideally, would achieve four goals: increased access, improved quality, better use of data for decisionmaking, and increased sustainability.

Increased Access to and Participation in OST Programs. The Foundation expected sites to ascertain the demand for services from different age groups, how to increase demand among certain groups, and the most effective locations in which to meet the demand with supply in order to develop plans to improve participation. To increase access, the sites could more systematically address such issues as safety (in transit and at the program location), access to transportation, affordability, and convenience (hours of operation amenable to children's and parents' schedules). They could build program locator systems or otherwise work to ensure that parents and children knew about the programs and how to access them. In addition,

[1] This section and the next are taken from Bodilly et al., 2010.

cities could conduct marketing activities to appeal to underparticipating groups, such as teens. Finally, the cities could open more slots at more locations to increase enrollment.

Improved Quality of OST Programs. While high-quality OST programs can produce positive outcomes for participating students, the quality of programming within a city is typically mixed. The Foundation expected sites to create mechanisms to support high-quality programs and ensure strong enrollment, attendance, and desired student outcomes. Activities could involve the development of standards, using standards to assess program quality and monitoring improvement over time, and vetting providers upon entry into the field with common criteria. Performance incentives could be offered to programs. In addition, the cities had to ensure that a supply of professional providers was available to meet expansion and quality goals simultaneously, implying that some professional development and training might be needed. Finally, sites could undertake evaluations of the effort to ensure that the changes resulted in improved outcomes.

Better Use of Information Systems for Improved Decisionmaking. Cities have not traditionally invested in developing data systems to support improvements. As a result, many cities across the United States are unable to accurately report the enrollment and participation rates of youth in OST programs. To support access and quality, cities needed to track program activities and monitor participation and attendance rates. This required the adoption of management information (MI) systems to track programs and participation if such systems did not already exist.

Improved Financial Sustainability. Finally, The Foundation was interested in making a large investment in system-building efforts, but not in funding the OST programs themselves or becoming a perpetual donor. Thus, grantees were required to develop sustainable funding sources for OST programming and system-building activities.

Site-Level Goals. While the four goals drove the efforts, The Foundation understood that sites would have to apply them in accordance with their own specific circumstances and city needs; therefore, each site was to develop its own methods for meeting those goals. For example, a site might concentrate on improving access for a specific group of children—middle school teens, for example. It might already have a fully developed MI system; therefore, it would concentrate elsewhere or devote resources to one activity in the early years and focus on others in later years.

Overview of the Study

To share the learning from this initiative with the larger OST field, The Wallace Foundation asked RAND to document the progress of the five cities toward building a system infrastructure to provide more coordinated and effective services. The purpose of the RAND study, conducted between January 2008 and May 2009, was to examine how the participating cities were developing and aligning local assets to maximize collective effectiveness in delivering sustained, high-quality OST programming to school-age children. In our analysis, we focused on the many differences across the sites to provide insights into how grantees made important choices and how this affected progress.

This examination had two tasks: (1) an analytic description of the development of the five OST sites supported by the grant, addressing what the sites attempted to do under the grant and the progress they made (reported in Bodilly et al., 2010), and (2) a description of the MI

systems established to track student participation in each of the Wallace-funded sites as well as in other cities (see McCombs et al., 2010).

The study addressed the following questions:

1. What decisions did the sites make about approaches to improving OST systems during the early phases of the initiative? What drove these decisions?
2. What progress did sites make toward increasing access, improving quality, using data-based decisionmaking, and improving sustainability?
3. How did collaboration or coordination enable progress? What other enablers were important?

To answer these questions, the study adopted a case-study approach, with the multi-organizational initiative in each city as the unit of analysis. The study entailed a descriptive analysis of the activities that the sites undertook and the conditions that led to progress toward each city's specific goals (under the broader Wallace Foundation goals). The analysis involved examining the data for similarities and differences among the sites and identifying themes in the factors that enabled or hindered progress toward their goals.

The case-study methodology and analysis is discussed in greater detail in *Hours of Opportunity*, Volume 1: *Lessons from Five Cities on Building Systems to Improve After-School, Summer School, and Other Out-of-School-Time Programs* (Bodilly et al., 2010). Here, we provide a short summary.

We conducted a literature review of collaborative interagency reform efforts in the OST and other social service sectors to help us understand the types of mechanisms that the sites might use to promote system building. That review supported the development of interview protocols and guided data analysis. The main themes from the literature were as follows:

- The development of citywide approaches among multiple organizations can be challenging.
- Although coordination is desirable for efficiency and other reasons, it may be difficult to achieve in the absence of political will or sufficient resources.
- Interagency coordination or collaboration to improve systems may be slow to develop, fragile, and difficult to sustain over time.
- Factors known to influence the success of initiatives include leadership capability, sufficient and capable staffing, buy-in from major stakeholders, public support, communication among stakeholders, funding, and city context.
- Success may depend on the emergence of leaders who use unifying techniques to ensure buy-in and coordination among the organizations and key managers involved in the effort.

The literature also revealed a number of activities in which sites might engage to varying degrees: (1) conducting a needs assessment; (2) building shared goals; (3) consolidating or developing more coordinated structures and roles; (4) coordinating among groups; (5) planning for and implementing coordinated activities; (6) developing, analyzing, and sharing information; (7) communicating with the public and stakeholders; and (8) addressing the need for incentives, rules, and supports.

We gathered documentation from each case-study site (e.g., grant proposals, planning documents, memoranda), interviewed 152 key staff in relevant organizations (e.g., the mayor's

office, school district, state and city agencies, providers, funders), and conducted a survey of sites' uses of MI systems.

Our primary goal was to track and describe the sites' activities and the challenges and enablers they faced in the process. To determine where sites started and what their intentions were (research question 1), we reviewed statements made in initial proposals and business plans concerning each of the four expectation categories: improving access, improving quality, developing MI systems, and developing and implementing plans for financial sustainability.

To determine the cities' progress (research question 2) and the factors that enabled progress (research question 3), we collected data on activities during the grant and records of accomplishments, examined documents, and conducted interviews. We conducted two rounds of interviews, the first in spring 2008 and the second in spring 2009. In the interviews we asked about (1) the general conditions of OST at the sites at the beginning of the grant and what the sites hoped to accomplish with the grant, (2) activities conducted during the planning grant and how they informed future efforts; (3) progress toward the four categories of expectations; (4) how the sites used cooperation, coordination, or collaboration to accomplish their tasks and whether it was important to the effort; and (5) factors that enabled or impeded the sites' efforts.

To gather information on providers' use of MI systems, we developed and administered a 20-minute survey (final sample = 358 providers) that covered the following topics and constructs drawn from the literature: frequency of data entry, MI system training, technical support, leadership, buy-in, usability of the system, use of data, usefulness of data, and perceived validity of the collected data. Additional details about the survey administration, sampling, and analysis are presented in *Hours of Opportunity*, Volume 2: *The Power of Data to Improve After-School Programs Citywide* (McCombs et al., 2010).

Purpose and Organization of This Report

This report presents descriptive information for each of the five case-study sites. It is intended as supplementary material in support of the two other study publications discussed earlier. Each chapter of this report presents a city case summary and descriptive information about the local context, the OST sector prior to the Wallace initiative, the history of the initiative (including the city's plans for the grant), efforts under the initiative in terms of the four major initiative goals (access, quality, use of data, and sustainability), and the enablers and challenges of the work in each city.

The report begins with the longest-implementing cities—Providence (Chapter Two) and New York City (Chapter Three). It then turns to the second set of cities funded—Boston (Chapter Four), Chicago (Chapter Five), and Washington, D.C. (Chapter Six).

Each chapter also contains two figures that show the city's OST system when the initiative began and what it looked like as of spring 2009. Each figure is similarly constructed. The figures are divided into three layers, from top to bottom: organizations involved in attracting funding and developing policy concerning OST, the OST providers who serve children on a daily basis, and, when applicable, a third level that organizes providers into centers for provision. The provider category includes CBOs and staff from city agencies (e.g., librarians who oversee programming for children) who provide OST services—often in schools. The figures are also divided vertically. On the left are nongovernmental agencies (including advocate groups, foundations, and CBOs), and on the right are government agencies (e.g., libraries,

parks and recreation departments, public schools). Each figure shows the primary organizational players; the lines represent funding, reporting, advocacy, or oversight connections. Note that these representations are simplified. For instance, they do not track sources of funding that flow into the city from the federal or state governments. However, comparing the two figures for each city should help clarify the structure of the city's OST system before and after the initiative.

CHAPTER TWO

Providence

Introduction

Providence was the first city funded under The Wallace Foundation's initiative. Providence received its planning grant in 2003. In 2004, The Wallace Foundation funded a collaborative effort to coordinate OST in the city, providing $5 million over five years. Led by Mayor David N. Cicilline and the intermediary he had formed to carry out the work—the Providence After School Alliance (PASA)—the city's strategy included an initial focus on improving access for middle school students and implementing quality standards and other tools to improve OST programming. The grant ended in 2009, but PASA secured continued Wallace funding in the amount of $2.6 million for three additional years (through 2012), with a focus on capacity building. This chapter discusses the progress and status of activities as of May 2009.

Local Context

Providence was the smallest city to receive a grant under the initiative, with a population of approximately 175,000 in 2003 (see Table 2.1). With a large percentage of family incomes that fall well below the national average, Providence had a demonstrated commitment to improving conditions for the city's children and youth. Mayor Cicilline ran on a platform to clean up city government and heavily promoted the community schools model during his campaign, which stressed the importance of supporting children and youth during and outside the school day. Mayor Cicilline was an especially strong proponent of OST programs and helped secure the initial planning grant from The Wallace Foundation.

In 2003, when Providence received its planning grant, more than three-fourths of students in the Providence Public School District (PPSD) were from low-income families and thus eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and the majority of schools were in need of improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. A new school superintendent, Thomas Brady, took over in 2008 and was reportedly a strong supporter of efforts to expand learning opportunities for students beyond the end of the school day.

OST Sector Prior to The Wallace Foundation Initiative

In Providence, the OST sector was private: No city agency provided oversight or funding for OST programming (see Figure 2.1). OST programs were offered by providers such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, community sports leagues, and church groups that received

Table 2.1
Providence Demographic Information, 2003

Characteristic	Value
Population[a]	175,878
Youth population (under 18)[b]	27.3%
Median household income[b]	$34,202
Individual poverty rate[b]	29.4%
Public K–12 enrollment[c]	27,900
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[c]	74.4%
Citywide attendance rate (average)[d]	89.2%
Number of schools in need of improvement/total number of schools[e]	38/43

[a] Estimate for 2003; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.
[b] Data from 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005.
[c] Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2003b.
[d] Rhode Island Kids Count, 2004.
[e] Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2003a.

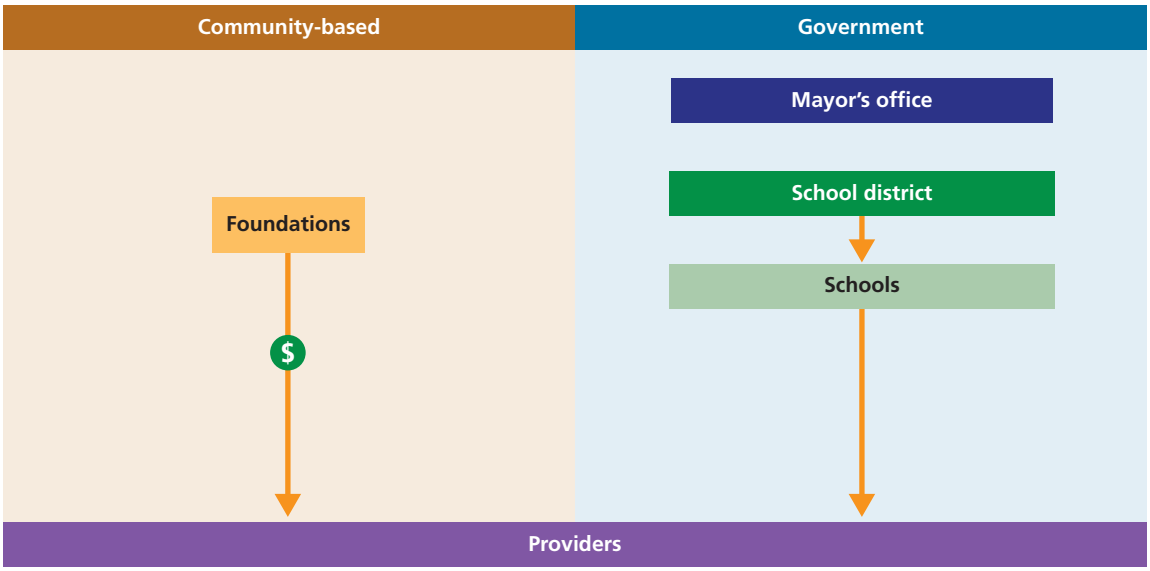
funding from private foundations (e.g., the United Way) or user fees. Individual schools also offered after-school activities through Title I funding. According to interviewees in Providence, for the most part, principals chose to partner with outside providers for after-school activities based on their perceptions of the school's needs, and a handful of interested teachers stayed after school to provide programming to students. Two community schools—one funded through the 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative and one funded by United Way—had more structured content, and each served around 300 students. Some sources questioned the quality and consistency of OST programming in the city and noted that funding for programs was never secure. As shown in Figure 2.1, there were no strong connections or coordination among city agencies or between city agencies and CBOs.

History of The Wallace Foundation Initiative

The Wallace Foundation approached the city in 2002 and initiated discussions of ways to build a stronger OST sector.[1] In 2003, convinced of the strong support of the new mayor, The Foundation awarded a planning grant. Because there was no strong OST activity within the government agencies and no strong community-based advocacy, the mayor and The Wallace Foundation agreed that Rhode Island Kids Count would coordinate a planning process in 2003 known as Learning in Communities. Mayor Cicilline convened more than 100 after-school program leaders, city officials, students, and parents. The Learning in Communities group presented a justification for increasing access to high-quality programs for children during nonschool hours. The group noted that youth service providers lacked a common definition of quality and that there was a resource gap between programmatic needs and actual

[1] Information in this section is derived from PASA's 2007–2010 business plan (PASA, 2007) and interviews.

Figure 2.1
Functional Design of OST in Providence Prior to the Wallace Initiative



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dollars invested in the system. Planners found that a great deal of the after-school provision in Providence was offered by small, independent providers. The group determined that a number of the smaller providers, particularly those serving high school youth, were successful examples that could inform future planning in Providence.

As part of the planning process, Market Street Research conducted focus groups with middle school parents and students, as well as surveys of larger groups of parents and students. This market research validated much of what was found by Learning in Communities. Market Street Research identified low participation levels among middle school students in structured OST activities and a range of parental and student concerns about safety, quality of programs and activity leaders, possible adverse influences from other participants, cost, and transportation.

Due to a dramatic drop in student achievement between the fourth and eighth grades and the lack of programming available to this age group, middle school youth were targeted. Interviewees mentioned that middle school youth were thought to be at a crucial development stage when high-quality OST programming could greatly benefit them. At the time of the release of the initial implementation plan, there were approximately 5,400 middle school students in Providence.

A promising "community school" model was developing in a handful of Providence public schools, in which community partners became involved, with public school resources intended to help children and families overcome non-academic barriers to learning. However, the Learning in Communities group claimed that, although many providers were using PPSD buildings, the spirit of collaboration between schools and providers was often lacking. The planning group determined that the Olneyville Community Schools initiative was a promising model, and it would later inform the school-based operation of the AfterZones.

The Learning in Communities planning group recommended that a local nonprofit education organization establish PASA to serve as an intermediary organization to coordinate

middle school OST efforts. Sources indicated that, strategically, it made a great deal of sense to establish PASA as part of Rhode Island's Education Partnership, a statewide public education fund that has since dissolved. Placing PASA within an existing organization allowed the new organization to focus on implementing the AfterZone strategy, as opposed to spending time and resources to establish itself as a new 501(c)(3), with all of the related administrative requirements.

The Plan

Mayor Cicilline followed the Learning in Communities planning team's recommendation to establish PASA and chaired its steering committee. Sources reported that he was instrumental in guiding the search for and appointing the first director of PASA, who possessed strong, proven skills in starting up new organizations. In July 2004, building on the planning team's efforts, the newly appointed director of PASA developed an implementation plan at the request of The Wallace Foundation.

The original PASA plan was based on three core strategies:

1. *System Building and Quality Measures.* This strategy was meant to create quality measures to guide the neighborhood campuses (strategy 2) and recreation centers (strategy 3) and to assist in efficiently building the OST system. PASA intended to develop and use quality standards and measurement tools to create common, high-quality practices across the system. Included in this strategy were plans to coordinate with city agencies and to involve them more deeply in OST provision, as appropriate; to identify system gaps, weaknesses, and opportunities to avoid service duplication; to provide training in support of program quality; and to create information-tracking systems. The plan also called for engaging city leaders and ensuring that relevant city practices were in line with the overall OST vision. Additionally, the strategy was meant to leverage funding and resources, promote connections and collaboration between city agencies and departments, and engage the community through a communication and outreach effort to build support for OST.
2. *Neighborhood Campus Development.* The neighborhood campus development strategy was meant to create centralized locations for youth to engage in activities after school. The neighborhood campuses, which were later named AfterZones, were to be placed in areas with colocated public facilities, such as middle schools, community and recreation centers, and libraries. Envisioned as a ground-level model of public-private partnerships, the campuses were to be used as launching points to connect with providers of specialized programming and also as hosts for providers. AfterZone staff were to actively recruit students, particularly those who were underserved.
3. *Recreation Center Development.* In combination with the neighborhood campus development strategy, the recreation centers were to create intramural activities and citywide leagues. Additionally, the plan envisioned growing the capacity of recreation center leadership and staff, better connecting the physical recreation center infrastructure with the schools, and making the recreation centers a part of the AfterZone campuses. Access to gymnasiums would allow PASA to provide a greater variety of recreational programming, rather than limiting activities to one sport in the single school gymnasium.

Goals

The implementation plan aimed for a number of measurable results and documented goals for attendance and participation in year 2 and for performance and youth development in later years.

The system-building goals included a clearly defined structure for PASA and plans for its future role in Providence, a set of quality standards accepted citywide, and a strategy for leadership development within the Providence OST community. PASA planned to launch two AfterZones and to actively consider additional AfterZone opportunities. It also wanted the first two AfterZones to serve the hardest-to-reach middle school students and to define criteria for qualified staffing, strong programming, evaluation, and provider professional development.

Award

Based on the thoroughness of the plan and strong mayoral support, in 2004, The Wallace Foundation awarded Providence a five-year, $5 million grant for the initiative, to be led by the new intermediary, PASA.

Efforts Under the Implementation Grant

This section details the city's OST efforts since the inception of the implementation grant, through May 2009. We first describe the functional design of the system after the grant and the mechanism used to coordinate OST system-building activities. We then describe activities and efforts to increase access, improve quality, use data to drive decisionmaking, and develop a sustainment strategy. Although each activity is discussed in only one section, some activities supported multiple goals.

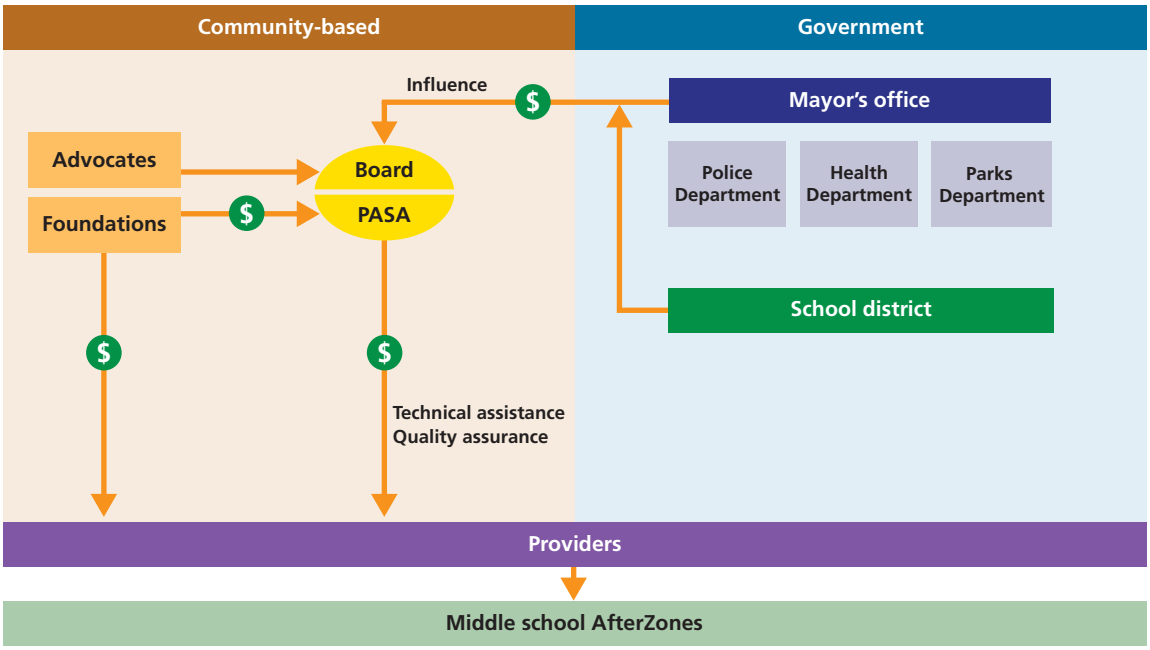
Functional Design

Prior to the grant, Providence's after-school sector, especially for middle school students, could be described as diffuse and largely private. Few programs were available for this population, and there was no coordination among policymakers or providers. After the award, major structural changes were the creation of PASA and increased collaboration among major city stakeholders (see Figure 2.2). PASA worked directly with community providers and the schools to increase access and quality and provided technical assistance and quality assurance to providers. It did so with the firm guidance and support of the city leaders on its steering committee (which became its board of directors in July 2007). In this new system, the school district provided space, time during the day for recruitment fairs, and busing to get youth home at the end of the day—all of which were significant contributions. Providers were organized around the AfterZone centers.

Coordination

PASA spent significant resources in the first three years of the effort on day-to-day program management and support. This period largely coincided with PASA's time as part of a local education organization and was referred to in the 2007–2010 business plan as Phase I (see PASA, 2007). Phase II, which began in 2007, was marked by PASA leaving its parent organization and becoming an independent nonprofit organization, as was planned from the start of the initiative. A wide variety of community partners were engaged in the effort, sitting on the

Figure 2.2
Functional Design of OST in Providence After the Wallace Initiative



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newly established PASA board and on AfterZone coordinating councils, community-led governing bodies that provided guidance, reviewed the budget, selected program providers, and hired staff. In the later years of the grant period, some of the providers in Providence began to function as community site management agencies that managed operations in the AfterZones.

Increasing Access and Participation

Creating the AfterZones. Each AfterZone was structured around a middle school (i.e., the anchor school) and surrounding community resources, including parks, libraries, and community centers, and each AfterZone provided a menu of after-school activities from which students could choose. Activities took place either at the AfterZone or in community sites (e.g., parks).

In the first year, a PASA team issued two requests for proposals (RFPs). The first essentially created the coordinating councils that would develop the first two AfterZones. It called for a group of community partners to apply to become the first two AfterZones. The second RFP called for individual providers to apply to run programs in the AfterZones. The point of the strategy was to build community ownership of the AfterZones and ensure that every community would benefit from the investment. By the fall of 2005, there were two model AfterZones, and by spring 2008, five AfterZones were in place.[2] In 2008–2009, the number of AfterZones was consolidated from five to three.

[2] In winter 2008, certain AfterZones merged (North End with East Side, and Lower South Side with West End/South Side) because they already shared programming and resources. Leaders felt that consolidation would make provision more efficient.

Each AfterZone was governed by a coordinating council that consisted of representatives from PASA, community site management agencies, anchor schools, AfterZone managers, and program partners. The councils' main functions included overseeing the budget, serving in an advisory role in hiring AfterZone managers (employed by PASA), and participating in the grant review process for the AfterZones.

Students registered in the AfterZone and chose individual programs in which they wanted to participate. A PASA staff member served as the manager of each AfterZone, and each AfterZone had a site supervisor, employed by the community site management agency or PASA. Anchor schools were responsible for providing an after-school liaison. Initially, PASA had a direct role in operating the AfterZones, but, over time, this responsibility was transferred to independent community site management agencies in the majority of the AfterZones. Many sources suggested that PASA's initial direct role in operating the AfterZones was necessary during the first few years of implementation, but as the AfterZone model gained greater acceptance in the community, partner agencies were able to handle site management.

AfterZones increased the access of middle school students to OST programs. According to estimates provided by PASA, during the 2008–2009 school year, 34 percent of enrolled public middle school students in Providence participated in PASA programs. Although the number of children served was down slightly in 2008–2009 compared to the previous school year (1,699 in 2008–2009, from 1,834 students in 2007–2008), due to the overall decline in enrollment in Providence public middle schools (from 5,462 in 2007–2008 to 5,011 in 2008–2009), the percentage of enrolled students served remained the same. PASA estimated that only 500 middle school youth participated in OST programming each year prior to the creation of the AfterZones.

In the first two years, the AfterZones focused on providing high-interest activities to youth and did not work to explicitly connect activities to the school day. However, over time, the AfterZones began the process of aligning programming with school-day activities and curricula, due in part to the arrival of a new, supportive superintendent and new funding sources (described in more detail later). To support this connection, PASA provided training to after-school program providers on how to better integrate academic standards into after-school programming, with separate training sessions focusing on literacy, arts, science, and health. In addition, we were told that before Superintendent Thomas Brady's arrival, some middle school principals were reluctant to keep their schools open past 4:00 p.m. to support OST program activities. In fall 2008, Superintendent Brady met with the principals and mandated that seven out of eight middle schools remain open until at least 5:00 p.m.

To coordinate with the school day, PASA implemented Club AfterZone in its three AfterZones for OST participants not involved in an off-site activity. Club AfterZone provided a consistent set of daily learning activities across the AfterZones and greater opportunity for instructors to work with students on their homework or enrichment activities related to their school curricula for one hour. The second hour was spent on another OST activity of the student's choosing. Instructors included youth engagement specialists ("YES" workers), and City Year (a youth service organization) staff who were at the school during the day and thus were familiar with teachers and the schools' instructional priorities.

In spring 2009 PASA's relationship with PPSD was strengthened by the creation of a new position, director of expanded learning, funded by the Mott Foundation's New Day for Learning grant. The director was to focus on building an expanded learning day in Providence schools and to report to both the district and PASA's executive director and board. During our

spring 2009 visit, a former PASA leader had been selected for this position through a competitive process.

Recreation Center Development. The implementation plan mentioned recreation center development as a strategy, given that these facilities were perceived to be underused, and new leadership in the Providence Recreation Department seemed receptive. The department was immediately asked to create a sports league. Sources indicated, however, that efforts to build the capacity of the recreation directors were largely unsuccessful, and the recreation center strategy was abandoned. However, many recreation centers remained partners in the after-school effort, and AfterZones used recreation centers as venues for programming.

High School OST Program. The high school OST provider community played an active role in the original design of PASA. Although eager to begin a strategy focused on high school, this set of providers agreed with the middle school focus that PASA adopted because of the dearth of services available at that time for children 11–14 years old. But since 2004, these groups continued to advocate for a similar effort to better coordinate high school OST programs in Providence. In 2008, a collective of high school OST organizations, the Urban Social Empowerment Collective, developed a plan to provide OST services to Providence's high school students. The plan created an infrastructure to promote constructive OST activities for older youth: a common area for high school students to gather ("the central hub"), a website, a network of Internet access points, and a "youth-friendly" transportation system. PASA agreed to take on implementation of the high school plan in 2009. It hired a part-time consultant to begin moving the plan forward, and the PASA board was seeking funding for this initiative at the time of our last site visit in spring 2009.

Improving Quality

System Building and Quality Measures. PASA's leadership felt that it was vital to develop quality measures through a community effort and engaged various groups to accomplish this goal. Starting in November 2004, a workgroup of approximately 25 participants was assembled to consider quality. It reviewed established standards from other cities and adapted them to meet Providence's needs. Sources told us that this workgroup created buy-in from providers and an identity for Providence's after-school programming at a critical time prior to the formal launch of the AfterZones.

After standards were set, it became necessary to develop indicators and assessment tools, as well as a tracking tool. A smaller team met in late 2005 and early 2006 to develop these indicators and consider an assessment tool. Participants included representatives from advocacy groups, professional development nonprofits, and city officials (such as staff from Rhode Island After School Plus Alliance, Rhode Island Kids Count, Childspan, and Provstat), and representatives from some provider organizations. According to sources, there was a tension between adopting a totally homegrown tool, derived from the community planning effort to create quality standards and indicators, and adopting a more well-known tool that had greater recognition and credibility. Eventually, a hybrid tool was produced that used HighScope's Youth Program Quality Assessment (Form A), an observation tool used at the point of service, and a PASA-developed administrative checklist that focused on administrative practices, staffing, and professional development (Form B). This hybrid tool is known as the Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment (RIPQA).

Program Assessment. PASA used Form A to assess the majority of its AfterZone programs. In addition, the RIPQA, through collaboration with the Rhode Island After School

Plus Alliance and the Rhode Island Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative, was used across the state of Rhode Island. The tool was pilot-tested with AfterZone providers and 21st Century programs in Cranston and Providence, which, sources indicated, helped foster acceptance of the tool. PASA's quality advisers observed programs and helped sites develop quality-improvement plans following the RIPQA. As of spring 2009, the state required 21st Century Community Learning Centers to use the RIPQA. Outside of the 21st Century site management agencies, providers could choose to have their programs "endorsed" by PASA, which required participating in the RIPQA process. Endorsed programs needed to meet certain enrollment standards and file supplemental applications in response to program RFPs. Endorsed programs received the benefit of applying once per year for funding, as opposed to having to apply for each session, and they received a small amount of funding for administrative expenses as an incentive. At the time of our last site visit in spring 2009, approximately 40 providers (up from 32 the previous year) out of 70 were participating in the RIPQA. That figure represented 100 percent of PASA's endorsed programs and 75 percent of all AfterZone programs.

One source indicated that the program assessment tool being used in 21st Century sites before the RIPQA was ineffective and that the RIPQA was much more useful. According to the source, the tool's multiple assessments were labor-intensive, but the opportunity to discuss programming with someone outside the organization proved useful. One recommendation from the outside observer was adopted at this site. Another source indicated that, during the pilot RIPQA process, quality-improvement concepts began to trickle down to line staff in a way that they had not before. This source also indicated that the tool provided a concrete way to assess the safety of facilities. The source noted, however, that some line staff were nervous about the RIPQA because they believed that their performance was being evaluated and that they could be fired. However, she told them, "No, this is a conversation about how you do your job and how you could do it better. It's a different tone." PASA officials noted that the key to the RIPQA process was continuous improvement, not accountability. Indeed, to prevent providers from viewing the quality assessment as punitive, PASA deliberately did not tie it to program funding.

Professional Development. Professional development changed over the course of the implementation period. According to sources, the initial professional development was not aligned to the developed program standards and therefore was not as effective as the more current offerings (although they did build some goodwill with providers). There were monthly workshops on such topics as parent engagement and staff retention, as well as a 32-hour youth development certificate program—based on the nationally known Advancing Youth Development Curriculum—called the Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers (BEST) initiative.

PASA sent trainers from Boston-based Health Resources in Action, the organization that delivered the BEST training, to HighScope for "train-the-trainer" training. Health Resources in Action then provided professional development aligned with the RIPQA to program providers. These workshops were open to providers using the RIPQA tool as well as to other providers interested in improving their programs. Programs not participating in the RIPQA were still able to attend and benefit from the training, which emphasized practices to improve program quality that could apply to all programs (e.g., providing a safe and supportive environment, ensuring positive interactions with youth, and promoting youth engagement).

Using Data to Inform Decisionmaking: Management Information System Development and Implementation

In its first progress report to The Wallace Foundation in July 2005, PASA cited the importance of acquiring an MI system for improving program quality. According to the report, an MI system would improve OST program quality in Providence by

- providing ready information to help guide program planning and practice
- demonstrating outcomes to help advocate for ongoing program support
- tracking student participation as a means to attracting additional system-level support for programs
- encouraging accountability by documenting how strategic investments have affected youth enrollment and attendance in programs.

According to interviewees, another of PASA's key goals in acquiring an MI system was that it would serve as a site-based management tool, something that "can pop out attendance sheets and mailing labels easily and provide bus drivers with corner stops for the day's youth participants." In its market research activities, Providence learned that safety was a key concern for parents. Consequently, a system that allowed program staff to give parents up-to-date information about their child's whereabouts was considered an enabler to ensuring participation.

In June 2005, PASA awarded the MI system contract to Cityspan, the developers of the web-based tool YouthServices.net. We were told that one important reason for choosing Cityspan was that most of the 21st Century–funded programs in Rhode Island were already using YouthServices.net.

OST providers can use YouthServices.net to improve operations and services. The system manages data on enrollment, participant background and demographics, attendance, retention, and programming schedules. Its reporting feature supports analysis by individual programs, groups of programs, and providers and allows them to track students with different patterns of participation and attendance.

At the time of our last visit to Providence in spring 2009, 22 providers and partners had a license to use the tracking system, including the four site management agencies (John Hope Settlement House, West End Community Center, Providence Housing Authority, and the Boys and Girls Club of Providence), all ten recreation centers, and several CBOs. The providers were primarily using the MI system to track enrollment and participation in the AfterZones. The four site management agencies used the tool on a daily basis to manage logistics, transportation, and program attendance.

AfterZone managers and, later, site management agencies were ultimately responsible for ensuring that YouthServices.net was updated on a daily basis. Initially, off-site providers were asked to enter attendance into the system. However, we were told that many providers were too busy providing instruction to get attendance data entered in real time (e.g., by 3:30 p.m.) so that the information could be used to produce bus lists to facilitate transportation home for participants. Instead of having multiple providers enter data, the data entry was centralized at each school site after providers took attendance, which helped improve data accuracy and timeliness. As PASA focused on transferring site managerial duties to the site management agencies, more of the responsibility for data entry and management fell to agency staff (although PASA staff still monitor the data closely).

One of the primary uses of YouthServices.net was to manage student transportation and provide drop-off lists for bus drivers, and, subsequently, interviewees claimed that most providers understood the importance of daily data entry. Bringing student participants home was an important part of ensuring program attendance, particularly for middle school youth, and providers viewed transportation home as a real benefit. PASA and site management agencies also provided resources (AfterZone coordinators and site-based staff) to support daily data entry into YouthServices.net.

We now address issues of data accuracy, training and technical assistance, data linkages and sharing, use of MI system data, challenges faced, and future steps.

Data Accuracy. Sources reported believing that the quality of enrollment and attendance data entered into YouthServices.net was excellent. Confidence in these data was related, in part, to the fact that data entry was conducted daily by PASA staff or site management agencies with full-time site coordinators, rather than by small providers who were not staffed to perform daily data entry.

Training and Technical Assistance. PASA sponsored an initial round of training by Cityspan, the developer of the YouthServices.net system, and purchased the hardware that providers would need to run the system. AfterZone managers and other PASA staff offered training on YouthServices.net annually and as needed to new staff at PASA, key provider agencies, and site management agencies.

Data Linkages and Sharing. PASA used PPSD data to populate student demographic fields in YouthServices.net, but these two systems were not continuously linked. During the 2006–2007 school year, PASA hired the Center for Resource Management to examine the possible correlation between OST participation, attendance during the regular school day, and school performance indicators. PASA also facilitated the linkage of YouthServices.net attendance data with PPSD data to facilitate that analysis. Public/Private Ventures was also conducting an outcome study using PPSD and YouthServices.net data.

YouthServices.net data were not linked to the RIPQA, PASA's formal quality-improvement process. The RIPQA involved a series of external observations, a self-evaluation conducted by the program provider, and the drafting of a quality-improvement plan.

Use of MI System Data. Stakeholders in Providence identified the following uses and benefits of data from the MI system:

- *Monitoring quality of programming.* PASA staff reported examining average daily attendance on a weekly basis and investigating and intervening in programs that fell below 60 percent. Interventions included targeted recruitment, phone calls to the home of absent youth participants, program redesign, decisions not to fund the provider in the next session, and (in extreme cases) contract termination during the session. However, PASA reported placing emphasis on helping the program and provider first and not sanctioning providers based exclusively on attendance, since program popularity was not always correlated with program quality. As one source described it,

  > We try to work with them. So we use the [MI system] in conjunction with our knowledge of programs, whether from the quality improvement tool (RIPQA) or otherwise. And we try to keep in mind that enrollment and attendance are only a test of demand in some ways. We can't punish a provider because junior high kids don't have an interest in opera or robotics.

AfterZone managers reported sharing enrollment and attendance reports with their coordinating councils (the community board of directors for each AfterZone) each month. The councils then used the information to brainstorm means of assisting or modifying programs with low numbers.

- *Streamlining transportation services.* PASA worked with Cityspan to create a customized transportation report in YouthServices.net that provided drivers with list of present students organized by bus route and drop-off location. This report helped ensure the young people arrived home promptly and safely.
- *Daily program management.* Site management agency staff reported using the MI system on a daily basis to generate attendance sheets, make phone calls home to students who were absent, and manage snack distribution. Indeed, on our provider survey, all surveyed providers reporting using the MI system for daily program management. Several providers recognized that YouthServices.net increased their ability to tell parents where their child was at any given time during the after-school session.
- *Informing stakeholders and building support for OST programs.* PASA's senior management team used reports to regularly share participation numbers with the board of directors, the city council, funders, and other interested parties. At the same time, providers used YouthServices.net to report to their funders, particularly Rhode Island's 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Sites were required to report on "regular" participants, or those who attended the program for 30, 60, and 90 days over the course of the year. YouthServices.net was particularly well suited to this task; it has a feature that allows automatic processing of data into the Profile and Performance Information Collection System, the federally mandated 21st Century Community Learning Centers database to which all providers are required to upload data on an annual basis. Providers also mentioned that reports from YouthServices.net were sometimes useful when applying for additional grants beyond 21st Century funding.

Challenges. Some providers acting as site-based management agencies reported using multiple information systems, either because YouthServices.net did not meet all of their institutional information needs or because other kinds of information were required by different funders. One provider said that because the organization took fees as part of its program administration, it needed another tool to track and manage that process (although it may be possible for YouthServices.net to be customized to handle fee administration). In another instance, a provider had recently implemented a different MI system and was reluctant to walk away from that investment. Multiple data-entry requirements for different MI systems were considered a strain on already lean youth service providers.

Future Steps. As of spring 2009, PASA was working with Cityspan to develop and add a grants management system to the existing YouthServices.net system. PASA hoped that this new part of the system would streamline its grant information organization as well as the grant review process.

Using Data to Inform Decisionmaking: Research and Evaluation. Initially, no evaluation was funded under the initiative, so PASA engaged in a number of smaller efforts to understand how the effort was being perceived and what the possible impacts might be. In 2006 and 2007, PASA asked an external consultant to interview AfterZone managers, various Providence stakeholders, and members of each AfterZone's coordinating council; to survey mem-

bers of the coordinating councils; and to review summary YouthServices.net data for the AfterZones (Brickman, 2007). PASA also engaged Market Street Research for a second round of market research in the spring of 2006, after the first two AfterZones had been implemented. The Center for Resource Management took an initial look at AfterZone outcomes in 2007 and reported on AfterZone participant demographics, as well as linkages between school outcomes and AfterZone participation. Most significantly, the report found that students who participated in PASA programs at high levels tended to have slightly higher rates of school attendance than nonparticipants. The report also indicated that PASA was not, in the words of one source, "skimming the cream," or attracting an atypical group of students relative to the total Providence middle school population.

At the time of our last site visit, Public/Private Ventures was in the midst of a three-year longitudinal study funded by The Wallace Foundation. The study had two components: an implementation study that included an evaluation of PASA's quality strategy and an outcome evaluation. The outcome evaluation followed a cohort of sixth graders, looking at grades, test scores, and attendance, and included a survey of participants and nonparticipants that focused on social and emotional competencies.

Developing a Sustainment Strategy

PASA's board determined that it would not charge fees for OST programming. However, financing OST slots was difficult because the city of Providence did not provide direct funding for places in OST programs. However, it did provide approximately $300,000 per year to support PASA's operations and programming. In addition, there were few local foundations in Providence. As a result, PASA developed a strategy focused on bringing in state and national funds to support OST programs. PASA facilitated an application for 21st Century Community Learning Center funds to provide middle school OST programming. At the time of our last visit in spring 2009, three organizations were drawing 21st Century funds, compared with one organization prior to the initiative. In these AfterZones, the site management agencies sent roughly one-quarter of their awards back to PASA for administration costs, plus the money to be paid to program providers. (PASA paid the AfterZone manager and distributed payment to program providers other than the site management agency). In addition, PASA brought in 30 CityYear Rhode Island members to work full-time in four schools.

PASA obtained additional grants and support for Providence's coordinated OST effort beyond The Wallace Foundation and 21st Century funding. Mayor Cicilline helped PASA secure federal Community Development Block Grant funding and a line item in the city budget to support it. He also directly assisted with fundraising from national foundations. PASA received grants from Bank of America, the Charles Steward Mott Foundation, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the Rhode Island Foundation, the United States Tennis Association, the TriMix Foundation, the Von Furstenberg Family Foundation, the Charisma Foundation, the Forum for Youth Investment, Hasbro Children's Fund, the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation, MetLife, and the Partnership Foundation. However, braiding these funds together took concerted effort, and long-term sustainability remained a challenge.

Enablers and Challenges to Implementation

Quality-Improvement Measures Implemented and Accepted by the Community. Quality measures, standards, and assessment tools were agreed upon and recognized at the local and state levels. Although not a guarantor of improved OST program quality, acceptance and implementation of these measures was a first step toward high-quality, consistent OST program provision in Providence. PASA's ability to develop and implement these measures without threatening or alienating CBOs was impressive and may serve as an example to other cities interested in driving quality improvement in OST programs. As one source explained, PASA leadership discussed program performance with the AfterZone managers and kept an especially close eye on programs with lower than 60 percent attendance. But the emphasis was on improving the program, not levying sanctions.

AfterZones. The AfterZone model developed widespread name recognition, and a significant number of middle school children received services. During the 2008–2009 school year, PASA programs served 1,600-plus middle school children. PASA estimates that OST provision to middle school children prior to the Wallace grant was somewhere in the ballpark of 500.

According to sources, including a middle school principal, these gains were due to the successful neighborhood campus model, the fact that transportation home was ensured for participants, and the increased funding that PASA leveraged for a greater variety of arts, sports, and educational OST programs at the middle school level.

Strong Mayoral Support and Organizational Leadership. PASA enjoyed continued support from Mayor Cicilline, who became a nationally recognized advocate of quality OST offerings. Sources noted that leadership of PASA itself was capable, energetic, and committed. PASA leadership was also well schooled in the politics of Providence and the constrained funding environment at the city, state, and national levels for OST programs. The mayor's reform agenda and support for integrated OST provision—in combination with well-qualified PASA leadership—was a significant factor in PASA's progress. The mayor was joined by the chief of police and superintendent, both of whom were strong advocates and contributors to the system.

Early Community Engagement. PASA leadership worked hard to involve as many stakeholders as possible in decisions related to OST provision in Providence: schools, principals, teachers, parents, the police department, city agencies and officials, and OST providers. Although this was not always easy—and some sources admitted that it might have slowed implementation of programming in the beginning—most of our interviewees suggested that getting community buy-in from the start avoided hurt feelings and opposition to PASA's goals and programs down the road.

Coordination with Schools and Principals. Not surprisingly, the strength of relationships between schools, principals, and the AfterZones varied widely, particularly in the first few years of implementation. AfterZone managers and school principals mentioned that teachers were key recruiters for AfterZone programming. Some schools did not appreciate the accomplishments of the AfterZone programs, and it was at times difficult to get access to principals. The school liaison position was created, in part, to alleviate some of these challenges.

On the other hand, some AfterZone managers forged strong relationships with school administrators and teachers and were very much a part of the school culture, attending parent-teacher orientations and student assemblies and providing information about PASA programs at those venues, and meeting regularly with principals, teachers, and guidance counselors. One principal put it this way: "The fact that our AfterZone manager is really part of the school

culture is very important. Any after-school program has to be part of the school if it is to be sustained." Principals viewed after-school programming as an asset to their school and student body and mentioned using after-school programming as an incentive to get kids to continue to come to school.

During our last visit to Providence in 2009, most interviewees seemed to feel that PASA's relationship with principals was predominantly positive. Some reported that the new PPSD superintendent was instrumental in this improvement, while others felt it was due more to a combination of principals growing more accustomed to PASA's model and seeing its value and PASA taking more serious steps to better integrate programs with regular school-day activities.

Coordination with Supplemental Education Services. At AfterZone sites that we visited, Supplemental Education Service (SES) provision was taking place, and there was some degree of coordination of SES with the AfterZone programming. One source indicated that SES providers gave a list of participating students to PASA and AfterZone representatives, and the AfterZones agreed not to enroll those students in competing programs and to provide transportation for students to reduce the SES provider costs. One AfterZone manager described the process by which students go from SES to the AfterZone programming as follows:

> We partner with SES, . . . so they're part of our schedule. If kids are enrolled in that, we don't enroll them in conflicting AfterZone programs. We try to tell it to the kids that it's all the same thing: "You do Princeton Review two days a week, but then you can come to us two days a week, or stay afterwards from 4 to 5 and do something else."

The manager mentioned a boost in enrollment in the AfterZone among students who had not previously attended AfterZone but began coming to SES programs. Offering transportation home at 5:00 p.m. also attracted students to the program.

Providers. One provider mentioned that PASA ensured access that did not previously exist to an identified group of public school students. According to this provider, public schools were perceived as too bureaucratic to work with, but PASA facilitated that effort. At the same time, some sources pointed to the finite number of high-quality providers as a real limitation to the growth of OST provision in Providence.

Transportation. Although transportation was key to driving student participation in OST programs, it continued to be an obstacle to the success and sustainability of the AfterZones due to the cost and logistics of getting children to after-school programs and then to their homes in the evening. A number of transportation issues were associated with the AfterZones, and maintaining funds to provide transportation was mentioned as a potential hurdle in the years to come. Two transportation issues emerged: transportation "within" an AfterZone (i.e., from the anchor middle schools to off-site providers) and transportation home for students at the end of the day. There was clear tension between providing children with interesting opportunities away from the school building, thereby increasing transportation costs, and having more programming at schools. The AfterZones promised to transport students home at the end of programming each day, and PASA looked to take advantage of existing resources, such as SES busing and what was known as a "detention bus," which transported students home after detention each day. One issue that emerged was differential pricing for school transportation and after-school transportation, with after-school rates being higher. Through PPSD, PASA was able to take advantage of the school pricing, resulting in cost savings.

Funding. Providence lacked a department of youth services and large local foundations that might have served as long-term sources of funding for OST programs. PASA's success in braiding different types of local and state funding streams with foundation and private-sector grants was notable. However, sources indicated that instability of funding was an ongoing challenge.

CHAPTER THREE

New York City

Introduction

In 2003, The Wallace Foundation selected New York City as the second city in its initiative and awarded it an initial planning grant to develop a business plan to restructure OST in the city. In 2004, after a yearlong planning process, The Wallace Foundation awarded the city $12 million over five years to undertake its plan. Under strong city leadership from the mayor's office and the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), New York reenvisioned its role in OST provision and grew into the largest municipally funded afterschool system in the nation. In fiscal year (FY) 2009, $116.6 million funded the operations of 609 OST programs that served more than 85,000 students. This chapter discusses the progress and status of activities as of May 2009.

Local Context

In 2003, the year prior to the Wallace grant, the population of New York City was approximately 8.1 million—rivaling the population of some states. It was home to a diverse population, approximately half of whom spoke a language other than English at home. Approximately 20 percent of the population lived below the official poverty line. The city had the nation's largest public school system, and the vast majority of students attending New York City public schools came from low-income families; 71 percent were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (see Table 3.1).

As of spring 2009, New York City was led by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who was running for a third four-year term. He was known for his results-based approach to city management, a commitment to improving the city government's information technology infrastructure, and a record of appointing city commissioners based on their expertise. One of the mayor's key priorities was reforming the city's public education system. In 2002, Mayor Bloomberg assumed managerial control over the New York City public school system. He appointed a chancellor to head the schools, eliminated the citywide Board of Education, and created the Panel for Educational Policy to help guide and approve policy.

Shortly after his appointment, Chancellor Joel Klein launched the Children First Reform Initiative, which called for systemic reform and restructuring of the city's Department of Education (DOE). This first restructuring focused on centralizing a decentralized system. To achieve its reform goals, the restructuring effort eliminated community school boards and organized the 32 independent community school districts into ten regions. Five years later, in

Table 3.1
New York City Demographic Information, 2003

Characteristic	Value
Population[a]	8,125,497
Youth population (under 18)[b]	24.2%
Median household income[b]	$39,937
Individual poverty rate[b]	19.0%
Public K–12 enrollment[c]	1,023,674
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch[d]	71%
Citywide attendance rate (average)[e]	89.0%
Number of schools in need of improvement/total number of schools[f]	345/1,296

[a] Estimate for 2003; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.

[b] Data from 2003; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005.

[c] Data for 2003–2004 school year; Dalton, Sable, and Hoffman, 2006.

[d] Data for 2002–2003 school year; Kadamus, 2004.

[e] Data for 2003–2004 school year; New York City Department of Education, undated.

[f] New York State Education Department, 2004. The value for schools in need of improvement is based on 2003–2004 data, and the total number of schools is based on 2002 data.

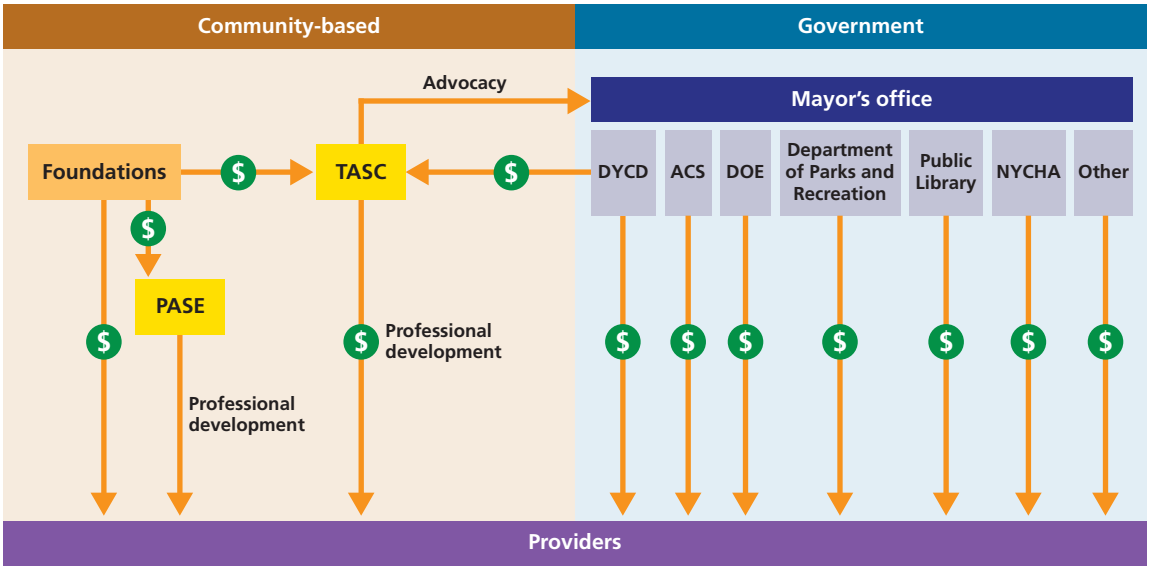
the spring of 2007, Chancellor Klein announced a second restructuring to promote school-based decisionmaking and to introduce market competition into the school support arena. This second effort disbanded the regional system and empowered principals by giving them more decisionmaking authority in their individual schools, including influence over curriculum selection, human resources, and budgeting, and greater responsibility to produce results.

OST Sector Prior to The Wallace Foundation Initiative

Prior to the Bloomberg administration and The Wallace Foundation's investment, multiple city agencies funded OST programs, quality was uneven, and access to programming was perceived as inequitable. The city government funded OST programs, but it was not a strong leader in the OST field. Prior to the appointment of a new commissioner of DYCD, Jeanne Mullgrav, in 2002, sources indicated that DYCD's "overall emphasis was on paper." While the city funded after-school programs for thousands of youth through numerous youth-serving agencies (see Figure 3.1), it lacked comprehensive data on the quality and distribution of programs and who was participating in them. However, it did have the Interagency Coordinating Council of Youth, which included representatives from the city's youth-serving agencies and held at least one public hearing and four internal quarterly meetings per year (DYCD Youth Council, undated).

Two intermediary organizations—The After School Corporation (TASC) and Partnership for After School Education (PASE)—were leading the efforts in the field, working to improve the quality of OST programs and build the capacity of OST staff. PASE was formed to provide professional development support to programs and staff in order to promote quality

Figure 3.1
Functional Design of OST in New York City Prior to the Wallace Initiative



NOTE: ACS = New York City Administration for Children's Services; NYCHA = New York City Housing Authority.
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programming in the OST sector. TASC was known for advocacy work, standard setting, and providing programming by funding CBOs. Several leaders in DYCD formerly held positions at TASC, and some respondents thought that, without TASC moving the agenda forward in terms of quality, standards, technical assistance, and sustainability, the city's current OST initiative would not have been as successful. As one respondent commented, "TASC really paved the way for many of these reforms and raised the profile of this issue through advocacy, through considerable investment, and an emphasis on quality and evaluation."

Figure 3.1 provides a rough outline of the system of OST provision that existed prior to the Wallace grant. As indicated earlier, numerous city agencies contracted with providers to offer services, but they did not coordinate with each other. City funds flowed to TASC for its coordination work, and TASC worked with providers to offer specific programs. TASC provided advocacy, and foundations provided funding to PASE and TASC for professional development.

History of The Wallace Foundation Initiative

When The Wallace Foundation began conversations with the mayor's office about the initiative, it found that the time was ripe for such an effort in New York City.[1] The mayor had appointed a special adviser for governance and strategic planning, who was to work with agencies throughout the city system on behalf of the mayor's office. Meanwhile, the new commissioner of DYCD was working to create a strategic vision for the agency and was interested in collecting reliable data and ensuring that the agency funded quality programs.

[1] Information in this section is based on New York City's out-of-school-time initiative business plan (City of New York, 2007b).

We were told that the mayor considered the OST initiative a natural complement to his education reform efforts. When he signaled his support for the initiative and charged his special adviser with its implementation, The Wallace Foundation made a one-year planning grant to support the city's efforts. In October 2003, the mayor formally launched the OST planning process by hosting an OST summit for 200 community leaders and representatives from city agencies, including DYCD, DOE, ACS, service providers, parent groups, and foundations.

The Planning Process

As part of the planning process, New York City set forth a number of supporting efforts, including research to determine the needs of the city and working groups that helped provide guidance on the development of an OST system.

Research. Research activities included estimating supply and demand in the city, tracking sources of funding, and creating demographic maps. Data from this research were fed to the working groups and used by the city to make data-based decisions. Information on sources of funding for OST was used to consolidate monies from multiple city agencies under DYCD.

The demographic maps detailed, by geographic area, such data as the number of youth, poverty rates, teen birth rates, percentage of English language learners, asthma hospitalization rates, and the percentage of youth not in school or working. DYCD also mapped "known supply," including ACS school-age child-care centers, TASC programs, and youth delinquency programs. Through these mapping exercises, DYCD found that there were gaps in city funding in certain locations and that the funding could be targeted to specific high-need zip codes.

Working Groups. The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City convened working groups organized around key topics such as professional development, quality, and cost. Each of the six working groups consisted of advocates, providers, academics, and funders and submitted reports to the city with its recommendations. These groups were large and met periodically for a year; hundreds of people participated in the process. We were told that the goal was to have an inclusive planning process so that all stakeholders would have a voice.

Interviewees who participated in the working groups held varied views about the process. While most appreciated the desire of DYCD to involve the community, the majority described the process as too long, too time-consuming, and including too many people. It was termed a "cumbersome, large planning process." Some interviewees expressed frustration because they felt that the work of their group had not been incorporated into the final OST plan. However, one respondent was far more positive about the process and said that one group felt that it ended too soon. We were told that the work of these groups guided the creation of the subsequent concept paper and the vision for OST in the city. Most respondents agreed with the visions, and although they thought that the process was cumbersome, they were satisfied with the outcome.

Interagency Coordination. While the external engagement with the field was occurring, city agencies, including DYCD, the mayor's office, DOE, ACS, the Department of Parks and Recreation, NYCHA, and the city's Office of Management and Budget, were coordinating. This process led to the consolidation of the majority of OST funding under DYCD. ACS lost the largest amount of funding, as the school-age child-care funds that had been controlled by ACS were given to DYCD to fund OST programming. This shift affected providers who had received funding from ACS, as the focus of OST was different (high-quality youth development rather than high-quality child care), and the funding per participant provided by OST was significantly lower than that provided by ACS.

One of the closest interagency coordination efforts occurred between DYCD and DOE. These agencies developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that guaranteed OST programs free access to a specific number of schools during the school year and summer (though CBOs were still required to make a personal connection with the principal). In addition, DOE agreed to fund extended-use fees (i.e., the cost of operating schools after hours and during the 20 school holidays when schools would typically be closed), security, fingerprinting of staff, and snacks, at substantial cost to DOE.

Interviewees described the special adviser as instrumental in establishing interagency coordination. We were told that, at the beginning, there was "a lot of in-fighting," which was not surprising, as the plan required shifting resources among agencies. As one respondent noted, "There were a lot of political interests vested in keeping things the way they were. She had to go to the mayor; he had to back it up." Another respondent explained,

> One of the challenges was that there were 21 youth-serving organizations [in the city government] and just a few with the word *youth* in their title. They didn't have uniform goals and weren't aligned around a common agenda. [The special adviser] really facilitated that discussion and, ultimately, that implementation.

Concept Paper. Based on the working groups' efforts and increased internal coordination, DYCD released a concept paper on OST and solicited comments from the field. The greatest amount of feedback DYCD received concerned the proposed funding per participant, which those in the field thought was far too low. DYCD had proposed $1,200 but ultimately increased the funding to $2,800 per participant. While the amount of funding per participant was increased, we were told that the level of funding provided was still inadequate to run a quality program and that most CBOs had multiple sources of funding. In fact, DYCD's external evaluator (Policy Studies Associates) found that only 20 percent of organizations relied exclusively on DYCD funds for their OST programming budget (Russell et al., 2006). Other concerns included how DYCD would target resources and where programs would be established.

While there were a number of concerns from the field regarding the details, we were told that there was broad agreement and support for the nine common goals for OST that were outlined in the paper:

1. Provide a healthy, safe environment.
2. Foster high expectations for participants.
3. Foster consistent and positive relationships with adults and peers, as well a sense of community.
4. Support the needs of working families.
5. Support healthy behavior and physical well-being.
6. Strengthen young people's academic skills.
7. Support the exploration of interests and the development of skills and creativity.
8. Support youth leadership development.
9. Promote community engagement and respect for diversity.

The Plan

After this intensive planning process, which resulted in reorganization and coordination among city agencies and created a vision for OST provision, DYCD developed its five-year plan.

Standards. To promote quality, DYCD planned to establish quality standards that were based on national standards. The goals were to align funding with these standards, to encourage private funders to adopt the same standards used in New York City's OST procurement process, and to create a report card system that would grade OST providers on program quality.

Reach and Equity. Using the mapping data, the city planned to target resources toward these areas and redistribute funding accordingly. In addition, New York City wanted to increase OST services in the summer months, promote universal coverage in elementary schools, and extend access to OST services in low-performing middle schools. Further goals included building OST capacity in high-need neighborhoods by improving the capacity and internal infrastructure of new and small providers serving those areas and ensuring that the emerging needs of diverse communities were met.

Data Collection and Analysis. DYCD planned to establish a web-based enrollment and tracking system that grantees could also use to enhance their program management.

Professionalization of OST Staff. To improve the quality of OST providers and services, DYCD planned to set aside funding for technical assistance that would be provided free of charge to the OST providers it funded. It also wanted to support the development of a career track for youth workers, increase providers' access to curriculum and best practices, and encourage providers to invest resources in their own staff members.

Evaluation. To learn from the initiative and monitor the impact of OST programming on youth participants, the city planned a longitudinal evaluation of the effort.

Using Research to Support Quality Improvement. New York City planned to use research findings to support capacity building for providers serving target populations and encouraged the use of a standardized self-assessment tool so that providers could measure their performance over time. In addition, DYCD planned to conduct market research to understand desires of parents and youth in an effort to improve participation in OST programs.

Supporting Parents and Youth as Informed Consumers. New York City aimed to develop and disseminate communication materials designed to assist parents in finding OST programs and to create opportunities for discussion and education between parents, older youth, and program administrators.

Connecting In-School and Out-of-School Time. In an effort to integrate school-day activities and OST programming, DYCD would collaborate with DOE to ensure that partnerships between OST providers and host schools were institutionalized, that OST program directors were fully integrated into host schools, and that academic components of OST programs were enhanced.

Desired Outcomes. The goal of the business plan was to develop a coherent system of OST programs for children and their families. A coherent system was defined as one that provided

> equitable access to quality programs that meet a range of needs, after school, on weekends, during the summer and during vacations . . . and in which the policies and programs of all city agencies that provide OST services are in alignment and one in which the government works in cooperative partnership with the foundation community and private sector towards these ends. (City of New York, 2004)

By the end of the five years, DYCD expected that more children would participate in an expanded range of services, that there would be more consistent quality across OST pro-

grams, and that there would be a more effective system that would align funding with high quality and performance.

Sustainment. New York City proposed to follow several avenues to ensure the sustainability of its OST system, including developing ties with the private sector, positioning the city as a national advocate for OST reform, coordinating public revenue streams, promoting sustainability strategies among providers, coordinating with private funders, providing better access to public facilities, and investigating fees.

Award. In 2004, The Wallace Foundation provided New York City with a $12 million implementation grant to support its efforts over five years.

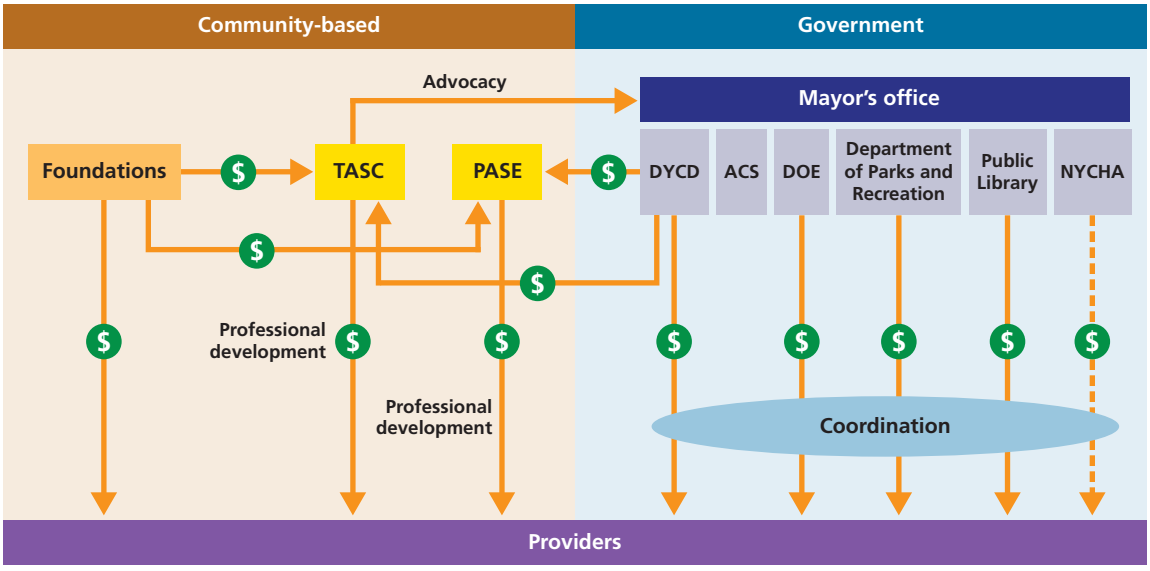
Efforts Under the Implementation Grant

This section details the city's OST efforts since receiving the Wallace implementation grant, through May 2009. We first discuss the functional design of the system after the Wallace grant and the mechanism used to coordinate activities. We then describe activities and efforts to increase access, improve quality, use information to improve decisionmaking, and develop a sustainment strategy. Although each activity is discussed in only one section, some activities supported multiple goals.

Functional Design

After the Wallace investment, DYCD became the major New York City funder of OST programming, and multiple agencies began to increase their coordination (see Figure 3.2). In 2008–2009, DYCD was given leadership over OST programs provided in NYCHA facilities as well (hence the dotted line in the figure). At the time of the study, DYCD awarded a significant contract to PASE for training and technical assistance for OST providers. What is not

Figure 3.2
Functional Design of OST in New York City After the Wallace Initiative



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shown in the figure is that the distribution of city-funded programs within the city shifted to previously underserved areas. Increasingly, DYCD was seen as the city leader in OST and the leader of the coordination effort. As one respondent said, "By and large, people would associate DYCD with after-school. . . . The mayor's office is really proud of OST. It is really exciting."

Coordination

Interagency coordination remained a priority after the planning period. The mayor designated a liaison, who assisted in the ongoing coordination among the city agencies. The position was funded by the Wallace grant. This individual served as a mediator among agencies and negotiated issues that emerged from different agency requirements for such matters as building-safety standards, licensing requirements, and health requirements and worked on state-level issues that affected OST provision in the city.

Improving Access and Participation

DYCD worked to improve access and participation through a new contracting process. In December 2005, DYCD initiated its first round of OST RFPs. Based on the market research that identified a number of areas with unmet needs, DYCD targeted 77 zip codes; a program proposed in those zip codes would get preference. This led to a redistribution of programming within the city: Communities with high need that had historically few OST programs received additional programs, while communities with many OST programs but lower levels of need received fewer programs. After the RFPs were released, DYCD held six community forums/pre-proposal conferences. Approximately 200 people attended each session, and DYCD received many questions about the funding per participant and enrollment targets. Another change from the past was funding of individual programs. In the past, funds were allocated at the organizational level; thus, if an agency wanted to bid for 15 programs, it would submit one proposal. One interviewee expressed the rationale for this change:

> When we're evaluating, assessing, and paying, we know that quality can vary greatly between sites. While this plan resulted in more paperwork—more contracts than otherwise—it was extremely important. It allowed us to form relationships with specific sites and organize everything at the site level.

DYCD received approximately 1,200 proposals in February 2006. Each proposal had three readers—many agencies were involved in the proposal reviews (at this point, there were no OST staff)—and it took months to read the proposals. To ensure that the contracts were awarded in time for programs to start in September, DYCD organized "marathon" contract selection sessions. At each of these sessions, every person who had to sign off on the decision was in the room (e.g., representatives from the mayor's office for contracts, DYCD's procurement oversight agency, City Hall staff). In the past, it could take months for awards to receive final approval from all agencies. While necessity required the invention of the marathon sessions, they worked so well that they became standard business practice.

During the selection process, DYCD used maps to ensure the desired distribution of programs across the city and within the 77 targeted zip codes. In 2007–2008, 66 percent of OST program participants resided in these targeted areas.

Improving Quality

Performance-Based Contracting. DYCD's new contract system held programs accountable for reaching specific attendance goals and reduced the amount of funding provided to programs that did not reach those goals. DYCD primarily funded two types of programs: Option I and Option II programs. Option I programs operated throughout the year, while Option II programs were smaller, targeted programs that operated for only a few weeks during the year. DYCD set clear standards for program participation for its Option I programming. Elementary-grade programs were expected to serve youth for a minimum of three hours a day, five days a week, for 36 weeks, with a participation target of 80 percent. Middle-grade programs were expected to offer programming for at least eight hours per week for 36 weeks, with a 75-percent participation target. Programs serving high school youth were expected to provide a minimum of three hours of programming per week for 36 weeks, with a 70-percent attendance target. Option I elementary- and middle-grade programs could also operate full-time (50 hours per week) programs for eight weeks during the summer. Option II programs were to operate 160 hours per year at any point during the year. In return for this flexibility, Option II programs provided a cash match of 30 cents for every dollar provided by DYCD. A DYCD leader described the new contracting systems as a method to encourage agencies to operate at full capacity and to maintain fiscal responsibility.

Program Management and Support. Under the OST initiative, there was a "paradigm shift in contract management," with a move away from contract monitoring to managing programs. Each DYCD OST program manager was responsible for approximately 36 OST grantees. In addition to monitoring the contract (e.g., checking attendance rates, approving payment allocations), program managers provided direct support through two site visits per year. During these visits, program managers tracked the progress of OST programs with the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) self-assessment instrument, which measured program quality against a common set of standards. Providers that failed to meet quality standards were referred for technical assistance.

DYCD worked with NYSAN on the development of this assessment tool. The NYSAN tool can also be used by programs to help them assess, plan, design, and execute strategies for ongoing program improvement (City of New York, 2007b). DYCD invested in training on the tool for its staff and the staff of other funding agencies.

DYCD made a substantial investment of city dollars in improving the quality of the staff of the OST programs it funded. As discussed earlier, DYCD awarded PASE a three-year contract, worth $550,000 annually, to provide a variety of training, technical assistance, and capacity-building opportunities to programs. These services were provided free of charge to organizations receiving DYCD OST funding. PASE offered a variety of professional development workshops and conferences throughout the year. In 2008, it also offered training in Staten Island and Far Rockaway in order to increase the participation of OST providers in these areas.

We were told that some programs were heavy users or "frequent flyers," while others did not attend the professional development to a great extent. Many of these offerings helped fulfill programs' licensing requirements. PASE also solicited ideas for training from DYCD, OST program staff, and their consultants. In addition, it provided training and support for use of the MI system.

For OST programs that failed to meet quality standards, PASE brokered targeted on-site technical assistance. After receiving a referral from a DYCD program manager, PASE would

follow up with the program, conduct a needs assessment, and contract with one of its consultants to provide the needed technical assistance on-site.

A new initiative in 2009 was to provide technical assistance in the areas of infrastructure and management to provider organizations operating a large number of programs (i.e., organizations that ran ten or more OST programs) so that these organizations could improve their own internal operations and thus provide stronger services to students.

Using Data to Improve Decisionmaking: Management Information System Development and Implementation

DYCD did not purchase an MI system from a vendor; it worked with a software developer to create a custom system, OST Online. The system was used to track student enrollment and participation and to provide other information, such as program design. OST Online not only served DYCD's internal needs, it also provided essential data to Policy Studies Associates, the evaluator of DYCD's OST efforts (The Wallace Foundation, 2005).

The desire to create an MI system reflected Mayor Bloomberg's priorities for education reform and system centralization, as well as his results-based approach to city management. Bloomberg emphasized developing IT capacity citywide. Because DYCD needed to implement OST Online in September 2006 (when the first round of new OST programs started), there was no time to pilot-test the system. We were told that the rollout was "very rocky" and that there was a "learning curve" for many of the 550 providers who had never entered data online before. However, for DYCD, the benefits of starting providers with the new MI system immediately at the start of new programming outweighed the costs of not piloting the system. Providers that already used an MI system faced an increasing burden to input data into yet another system. That first year, DYCD contracted with PASE to provide 40 OST Online training sessions for 800 provider staff to help deal with the new MI system requirements (City of New York, 2006).

OST Online developed over time: Fields were added and modified based on feedback from providers and DYCD staff. DYCD respondents reported that CBOs wanted the option to enter attendance and demographic data into the system for children whose program slots were not funded by DYCD. In response to this request, DYCD opened up OST Online for non-DYCD slots to help minimize this administrative burden (City of New York, 2006). In addition, DYCD expanded OST Online to Beacon (school-based community centers) and Service Learning/Teen Action programs in the fall of 2007 (City of New York, 2007c). Additionally, there was an OST message board in OST Online that providers could access. The message board contained information about deadlines, upcoming professional development opportunities, and other topics of interest to OST providers. DYCD began to recognize exemplary programs and activities via the OST Online message board, and one respondent indicated that this was used as a method to encourage and disseminate best practices. These additions appear to have paid off in terms of provider buy-in for the system. In our survey, 91 percent of New York City providers reported that OST Online provided them with important information about their program.

DYCD program managers reported using OST Online to monitor the providers and programs for which they were responsible (approximately 35 programs). Providers entered the scope of services that they planned to provide into OST Online, and program managers were able to approve or reject that scope of services. If adjustments were needed, providers could make these in OST Online.

Upon enrollment, providers entered a variety of participant-level demographic and contact data. Over the course of the program, they were expected to enter the activities in which children were participating as well as attendance data. Activities were entered according to the approved work scope that was submitted via OST Online. Information about staff members was not a required section, but we were told that, by fall 2009, such information would become a requirement. DYCD interviewees described a desire to gather this information to get a better sense of the makeup of the OST workforce and to ensure that provider staffs have been cleared to work with children (through fingerprinting and checks against the statewide registry of adults who had abused or neglected children).

Program providers were required to enter daily attendance information on a rolling basis (within 14 days). After 14 days, providers were locked out of the system and were unable to input information until they spoke to their DYCD program manager to rectify the situation. Providers reported using different modes of data entry. For instance, one hired an administrative assistant to update OST Online. Another provider kept attendance data in paper logbooks, and personally input the attendance data into the system at the end of each week. According to DYCD respondents, some of the larger organizations with a number of DYCD-funded programs sent attendance data to a central data-entry person, who updated OST Online. These respondents indicated that there were drawbacks to this method; these sites reportedly were less able to "use and understand attendance data."

The following sections address issues of data accuracy, training and technical assistance, data linkages and sharing, use of MI system data, challenges faced, and future steps.

Data Accuracy. DYCD officials reported that providers had greatly improved their ability to use OST Online since the system's inception and that fewer than 3 percent of all data entries in FY 2008 were erroneous (City of New York, 2008).

Program managers used a number of methods to monitor data accuracy. For elementary-age programs, providers entered whether a student was present or absent for the day. One program manager reported counting children present during the afternoon snack period, when all children were generally in the same room, and then checking to ensure that the count matched the number of children marked present in OST Online. For middle school and high school programs, providers entered the number of hours that children attended activities. Therefore, program managers could run one of two reports to determine whether programs were entering participation accurately. The first was an activity conflict report, which allowed program managers to see whether programs assigned one student to multiple activities at the same time. The second was a rate-of-participation report, which showed whether a child was entered as attending more hours of programming than were offered in a week. For example, a program running five days per week, three hours per day, should not have any children participating for 16 or more hours per week.

Training and Technical Assistance. During the first year of MI system implementation, much of the technical assistance offered by PASE focused on helping providers use OST Online. This effort was later expanded to include beginning- and intermediate-level training on using OST Online. Beginning training sessions focused on familiarizing users with the screen and how to enter data. Intermediate training sessions covered how to use reports and some aspects of program design. In March 2008, DYCD held three sessions for executive-level users of OST Online, which were attended by 60 people. These training sessions focused on using the system for reporting and program management (City of New York, 2008). DYCD developed a report guide in conjunction with these training sessions.

DYCD program managers reported frequently providing initial troubleshooting when providers had technical questions about OST Online. New DYCD program managers could attend the same PASE OST Online training sessions that were offered to providers, and DYCD provided informal one-on-one training to new program managers as needed.

Data Linkage and Sharing. Data from OST Online was distributed throughout the city government. Aggregate enrollment reports, broken down by grade level, were sent monthly to the mayor's office, and demographic profile reports were run once a year. Participant-level data were shared with ACS, and ACS shared participant information and case numbers with DYCD. ACS information was used by DYCD to facilitate priority enrollment periods, during which ACS-eligible children had the first chance to enroll in OST programming through DYCD. At least once a year, DYCD sent DOE a list of participants. As of spring 2009, DOE did not send student-level data to DYCD.

DYCD expanded OST Online to include other DYCD programs, including Beacons, Service Learning/Teen Action, and after-school programs that were funded with federal dollars, and it hoped that other city agencies might adopt it. Respondents indicated that DYCD was able to track a student who participated in an OST program one year and a Beacon program the next year, for example. DYCD also had the goal of collecting participant outcomes and program quality indicators that could be linked to the sites.

Case management information and budget data were not entered into the OST Online system. While program managers conducted quality assessments of programs using the NYSAN observation tool, these data were entered into a contract management system and were not uploaded to OST Online.

We heard from a variety of respondents that certain providers may have had outside reporting requirements to other organizations or funders. Program providers reportedly asked DYCD if it might be possible to coordinate information from OST Online with their other MI systems. DYCD respondents, however, noted legal and confidentiality concerns that prevented linking different MI systems.

Use of MI System Data. Stakeholders in New York City identified the following uses and benefits of information generated by the MI system:

- *Promoting evaluation and data-driven decisionmaking.* DYCD used data from OST Online for the longitudinal evaluation, funding decisions, marketing, and specifications for RFPs. We were told that making decisions based on data that aligned with DYCD's vision helped the agency stand by its decisions. Specifically, at the program level, DYCD used data gathered from OST Online to determine whether programs met their performance targets. In conjunction with site-visit data, DYCD staff used MI system data to withdraw funding from a small number of programs that were not meeting performance targets. DYCD also used data from OST Online to make funding decisions for subsequent OST expansions. Using these data, DYCD was able to identify providers that were likely to be able to expand successfully (City of New York, 2007a).
- *Improved contract management.* Program managers at DYCD described using OST Online data to track the performance of the programs for which they were responsible. In their view, the MI system helped shift the nature of contract management to focus on quality as well as compliance. In particular, program managers reported consulting the data collected by OST Online prior to their biannual program site visits. As of the 2006–2007 program year, program managers used the *OST Site Visit Guide* during their

site visits. Within the *OST Site Visit Guide*, program managers could reference enrollment and participation data, as well as evaluation data (City of New York, 2007a). Recently, DYCD decided to provide special technical assistance in organizational management and infrastructure to organizations with a large number of funded programs. Staff at DYCD used the MI system to quickly determine how many organizations would be eligible for this training.

- *Promoting programs and creating government efficiencies.* Through data sharing with ACS, DYCD was able to track (1) which children received informal after-school care (from grandparents or neighbors) that was funded by ACS and (2) which families used DYCD programs but still continued to draw on ACS informal-care funding. Families could not receive ACS informal-care funding if their children were participating in city-funded after-school programming; the city aimed to increase the number of families selecting DYCD programming. Leaders believed that the DYCD programs were often of better quality (because of their youth-development focus and training for provider staff) and less expensive than informal care. Thus, DYCD used the information to target families not using its services and to make them aware of the no-cost DYCD after-school programming options. ACS used the information to discontinue informal-care funding for families that were participating in DYCD programs.

Challenges. Respondents discussed a few challenges associated with implementing OST Online. DYCD officials reported that OST Online was handling data for nearly 200,000 participants and that, in FY 2008, more than 12 million activities were entered. We were told that the size of this data set can slow the system when used by program managers and can make certain data unavailable at times (City of New York, 2008).

Some respondents indicated that keeping case management and funding information on a separate system from OST Online was not an ideal arrangement. Additionally, DYCD program managers monitored program quality using the NYSAN tool, which was not integrated with OST Online.

Some providers were reportedly frustrated by the inability to link OST Online with other MI systems that they were required to use by other funders.

Future Steps. We were told that the goal was to have providers become better able to use the report functions in OST Online so that they would be able to modify their offerings and make informed decisions about future programming. One DYCD program manager mentioned an elementary school provider that used the participant rate to identify Friday attendance among fifth graders as a trouble area for its program. This program altered its Friday offerings and was able to improve its overall rate of participation as a result. While the program manager noted that only some programs were doing this type of analysis, DYCD was hopeful that more programs would do so as they became more familiar with OST Online and its benefits.

DYCD reported that it planned to link OST Online with DYCD's fiscal department to facilitate the performance-based payment mechanism. Additionally, DYCD hoped to administer online surveys to children through OST Online for the Policy Studies Associates evaluation. These surveys will be used as part of DYCD's effort to track outcomes of OST participants. Finally, DYCD planned to create a public interface that would allow families to learn more about specific OST offerings (City of New York, 2008). DYCD continued to create awareness across the city about the OST Online system and its capabilities and hoped to encourage the

use of OST Online by the Department of Parks and Recreation and other organizations in the city that offered OST programming to youth (City of New York, 2008).

Using Data to Improve Decisionmaking: Research and Evaluation

DYCD adopted a data-driven approach to its work. In this section, we describe two additional methods (outside of adopting an MI system) that it used to collect and analyze data: conducting market research and funding an ongoing evaluation.

Market Research. DYCD conducted market research to understand how parents and others viewed OST programming. One finding was that parents sometimes associated "free" with "lower quality." As a result, DYCD changed its marketing materials to describe programs as being "at no cost to you" or "city-funded." DYCD also changed the way it sent announcements to parents—sending postcards rather than more official-looking documents from the commissioner.

Evaluation. DYCD contracted with Policy Studies Associates to conduct a three-year evaluation of the OST initiative. DYCD appeared to be an active user of results from the evaluation. For instance, the evaluation found that parents particularly liked and needed summer programs, so DYCD made summer programming a requirement in the next round of RFPs. Interviewees throughout the system—from all levels of DYCD and leaders in the field—mentioned and referred to the Policy Studies Associates study. In 2009, DYCD remained committed to continuing evaluation even in the face of potential budget cuts. As one DYCD official put it, "It has been important to maintain the core mission and the component parts, and that is quality, direct services and also evaluation. Very often, you say, 'Let's throw out the evaluation, the capacity building.' For us, that is not fluff; that is core."

Developing a Sustainment Strategy

The city's OST system was based on public funding, and DYCD established the following strategy to achieve sustainability: articulate its purpose, provide high-quality services, and report how well programs are working. As one respondent said,

> What I can do is assure people that when you put money in after-school, parents are satisfied, kids are coming, staff are qualified, children are more academically motivated, and I can go on and on with a list of accomplishments that have been shown. In tight times, that is a formula that will ring with taxpayers.

DYCD officials also thought that parent satisfaction was a key to sustaining OST in New York City. As one respondent put it, "A council member doesn't care what I think. He cares what his constituents think. If they [city council members] are hearing good things, then that is the biggest boon of support."

Enablers and Challenges to Implementation

Strong, Respected Leadership in DYCD. Many respondents described the strong leadership at DYCD as a key to the success of the OST initiative.

Vision. New York City government leaders had a strong vision for improvements to OST programs before The Wallace Foundation initiative. City agencies did not create a strategy or program specifically to obtain foundation funding; rather, foundation funding enabled New

York City's leaders to accomplish goals that they had already set. One respondent said, "I do want to give credit to Wallace. Their support allowed us to institutionalize our plans." Further, by refining its vision for OST, disseminating a public concept paper, and directly communicating with the public, DYCD was able to stand by tough decisions because those decisions matched its vision and goals. As one interviewee commented,

> [When making these decisions,] a neighborhood, politician, organization, parent, someone will be slighted. Have a consistent message for a councilmember or a parent. This is the vision; this is how we approached this. This is how the city will be better off and where we're hoping to be in the future.

It appears that DYCD communicated its OST vision throughout other city agencies, as individuals interviewed outside of DYCD had a firm grasp on the overarching goals and focus of OST.

Strong Mayoral Support. In a city the size of New York, mayoral support was critical to successful change. The OST initiative shifted resources and demanded better coordination and communication among agencies. Because it was clear that the mayor wanted this initiative to succeed, agencies were forced to communicate, share information, and cooperate with one another. His interest in the initiative was signaled by having a point person to coordinate the agencies' efforts. We were told that, during the planning process, the mayor's special adviser "was instrumental in pulling together [the commissioners] around a unified goal of after-school." Even after the planning process ended and the special adviser had left, the mayor appointed a replacement to serve as a liaison among the agencies. He also signaled his support for the initiative at press events and in state-of-the-city speeches. In addition, he designated OST as a baseline item in the executive budget.

Steady and Increasing Funding Stream. A growing funding stream from the city also enabled the success of the initiative and solidified the DYCD's authority. The growing funding for OST generated goodwill for the initiative across the city. In addition, the contribution of DOE in terms of facilities, food, extended-use fees, and fingerprinting for OST providers allowed DYCD to focus its resources on increasing the number of slots available to students.

Use of Data. New York City made use of the data it collected. As mentioned earlier, DYCD used data—from OST Online, market research, and an external evaluation—to inform funding decisions, marketing campaigns, and specifications for RFPs. Making decisions based on data that aligned with the agency's vision also helped DYCD stand by its decisions, even when those decisions created "losers." As one respondent put it, the agency can say, "Based on the data that we have before us, these are the right decisions."

Shifting Landscape of the DOE. Principal autonomy created flux in the school system, which affected provider organizations. Further, moving toward empowerment of principals required OST programs to "justify [their] presence to principals." If the principal did not want a provider in his or her school, the provider could be displaced. One respondent noted,

> We've had a lot of changes at DOE and how things run there. . . . It kind of goes principal by principal at this point. It's up to us to make the matches and make those work. With principal turnover, it can be tricky to get principal buy-in.

In the rare cases in which a principal decided to remove a program from his or her school, DOE helped identify alternative schools in which the OST program could operate.

CHAPTER FOUR

Boston

Introduction

The Wallace Foundation approached the city of Boston regarding the initiative in late 2005. After a five-month planning period, in 2006, The Wallace Foundation funded Boston After School and Beyond (Boston Beyond), an intermediary, to manage Boston's out-of-school learning initiative, Partners for Student Success (PSS). PSS represented an intensive school-based model that encompassed school-, program-, and system-level strategies. While PSS operated in five to ten pilot schools during the first two years of the grant, the initiative faced some setbacks, due in part to high turnover among key personnel. In March 2008, Boston Beyond submitted a revised business plan to The Wallace Foundation. Under this plan, Boston Beyond retained overall leadership for PSS and responsibility for systemwide goals, while the day-to-day operations of activities under the Wallace grant transferred to the Department of Extended Learning Time, Afterschool, and Services (DELTAS), a division within the Boston Public Schools (BPS). This chapter discusses the progress and status of activities as of May 2009.

Local Context

In 2005, the population of Boston was almost 600,000, 21 percent of whom were under the age of 18 (see Table 4.1). Approximately one in five individuals in Boston lived below the official poverty line.

While BPS had made improvements over the past decade, the school system faced its share of challenges, and almost three-quarters of students attending BPS schools came from low-income families. As of 2009, elementary and middle schools were organized into three geographic zones. Students were able to apply to schools in their zone of residence and to schools that were outside their zone of residence but in their "walk zone." BPS provided transportation for all these students regardless of their choice of school; many children attended schools outside of their local neighborhood. All high schools were open to students citywide; however, high school students typically traveled via public transportation.

While BPS provided homeward-bound transportation directly after school, it did not provide it for students engaged in after-school activities. According to interviewees and Boston's business plan for the initiative, lack of transportation home created a barrier to school-based OST participation for many students.

Table 4.1
Boston Demographic Information, 2005

Characteristic	Value
Population[a]	596,638
Youth population (under 18)[b]	20.9%
Median household income[b]	$42,562
Individual poverty rate[b]	22.3%
Public K–12 enrollment[c]	57,349
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[c]	73.1%
Citywide attendance rate (average)[d]	91.7%
Number of schools in need of improvement/total number of schools[e]	66/127

[a] Estimate for 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.
[b] Data from 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005.
[c] Data for 2005–2006 school year; Garofano, Sable, and Hoffman, 2008.
[d] Massachusetts Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, 2005.
[e] Massachusetts Department of Education, 2006.

Between 2005 and 2009, Boston had three superintendents. Superintendent Tom Payzant departed in 2006 after 11 years with BPS. Mike Contompasis, the district's chief operating office since 1998, served as the interim superintendent for one school year until Carol Johnson became superintendent in 2007.

OST Sector Prior to The Wallace Foundation Initiative

Boston had a rich history of OST and was considered a leader in developing the OST field. The first attempt to organize around OST issues came from Parents United for Child Care (PUCC). PUCC was a grassroots organization formed in 1987 with the goal of improving city-wide access to quality after-school programs, particularly for low-income students. It mobilized parents to push for improved child-care policy on the local and state levels. One respondent described PUCC as a pioneer agency focused on quality, affordability, and access. For instance, it successfully lobbied for transportation for students to improve access to OST. It led the Boston Making Out of School Time Matter Initiative, which provided small start-up grants and intensive technical assistance to a group of public schools that were initiating new school-based before- and after-school programs. It also published the annual *Guide to Boston's Before and After School Programs*. PUCC employed many OST leaders and incubated OST ideas in Boston. One respondent said, "If not for PUCC, very little of what you see now would exist." Following a change in leadership in 2004, PUCC became BOSTnet (Build the Out-of-School Time Network). We were told that, while continuing the mission of improving access and quality of after-school programs, BOSTnet has not continued parent organizing, which was conducted by the Boston Parents Organizing Network, among other organizations.

Mayor Thomas Menino had a long history of supporting OST in Boston. As a member of the Boston City Council, he was a supporter of PUCC and sat on its board. As mayor, he

started the 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative, the first city after-school office in the nation. This initiative, which began in 1998 and lasted until 2004, aimed to improve and expand community-based OST programs in BPS. According to interviewees, having the mayor behind the initiative spurred interest in OST across the city. One of the office's most significant accomplishments was opening schools until 6:00 p.m. free of charge and allowing CBOs to operate OST programs in the schools. Mayor Menino also helped develop Boston's After-School for All Partnership, which included representatives from city government, foundations, and business, to increase funding for and the availability of high-quality OST programming. The partnership committed more than $26 million in new funding over five years to expand, improve, and sustain after-school programming. In 2004, Boston After School and Beyond (Boston Beyond), an independent public-private partnership, was formed to serve as a successor to the 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative and After-School for All Partnership (Boston After School and Beyond, undated). The mayor helped create Boston Beyond and served as its honorary chair. The organization saw its major roles as facilitating communication, improving the use of data in OST, creating and disseminating research and analysis to the OST community, creating strategic initiatives, and developing further resources for OST.

While there were strong initiatives and wide interest in OST in Boston prior to The Wallace Foundation's involvement, the OST field was very decentralized. One respondent thought that Boston had taken a "let 1,000 flowers bloom" approach to OST.

In 2005, prior to the Wallace grant, the OST field in Boston included two intermediary organizations, BOSTnet and Boston Beyond, which worked to influence policy, provide information to parents, and provide assistance to OST programs. The city provided some funding to Boston Beyond and funded some OST programming, primarily through its community centers, which were operated by the Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF). Much funding for OST programming came from local sources or the state.

Boston Beyond and BOSTnet are in the community-based portion of Figure 4.1. Their key role was advocacy, and they were funded by foundations and by the city through BCYF. However, the city had no coordinating mechanisms. Three entities were heavily involved in providing funding to providers: BPS, the city library, and BCYF.

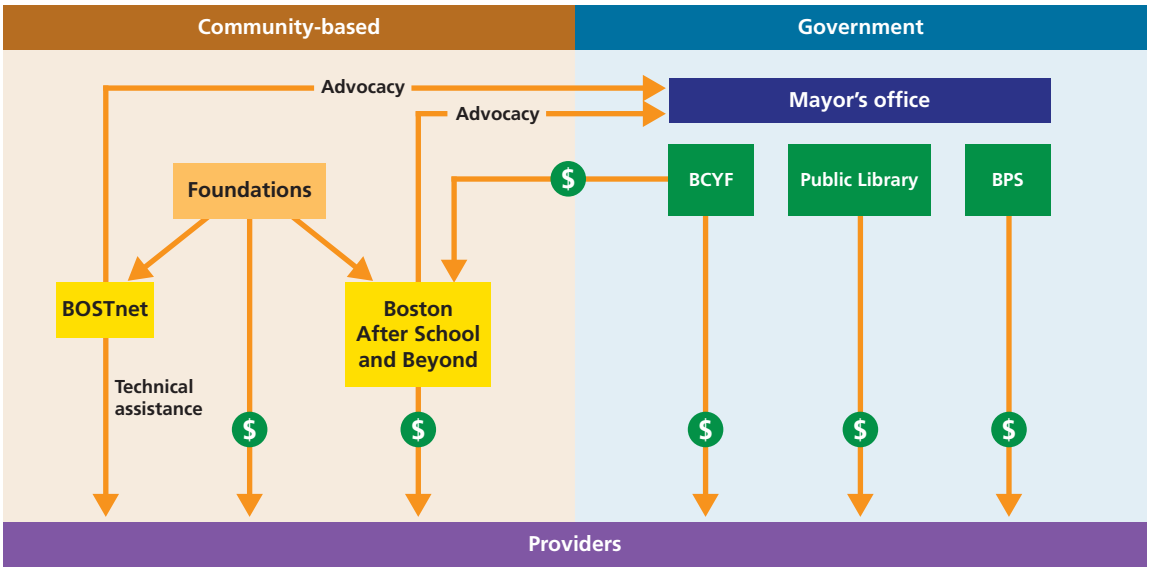
History of The Wallace Foundation Initiative

The Wallace Foundation approached Boston Beyond and the city in late 2005.[1] Wallace was interested in Boston because it had a history of strong mayoral commitment to OST and innovation. Boston Beyond seemed poised to lead the effort for two reasons: the mayor was the honorary chair of Boston Beyond's board and the board included city leaders and leaders in the OST community.

When The Wallace Foundation approached Boston, a group of leaders was focusing on ways to assist the lowest-performing schools in Boston—those who were in "corrective action" or "restructuring" for failing to make adequate yearly progress for four or more consecutive years under No Child Left Behind. In particular, the leaders embraced the "full-service school" model in Boston, which took a more comprehensive approach to education by integrating health, mental health, and social services into the school, and they developed the initial ideas

[1] This section is derived from the PSS business plan (Boston After School and Beyond, 2006).

Figure 4.1
Functional Design of OST in Boston Prior to the Wallace Initiative



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for the PSS initiative. In summer 2005 an RFP went out to schools in corrective action or restructuring. Five schools were selected for funding in December 2005, and a memorandum of understanding was signed with each by January 2006. According to the business plan, the Wallace planning grant allowed Boston Beyond to "sharpen its theory of change and its strategy for PSS" (Boston After School and Beyond, 2006, p. 5).

The Plan

PSS was an intensive, school-based model that encompassed school-, program-, and system-level strategies. We describe this model and Boston's strategic plan for system building, as outlined in the initial business plan submitted to The Wallace Foundation in March 2006.

School-Level Strategy. The school-level goals were to align efforts between PSS schools and service providers to address the needs of students and to increase the participation of struggling students in high-quality OST programs and other services. To reach this goal, PSS schools would each have a manager of extended learning services (MELS), who would be responsible for coordinating OST services with student needs and the school day to ensure that services were integrated and mutually reinforcing in promoting learning and development.

Specifically, the MELS would be responsible for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of children (with each school's Student Support Team, a group consisting of administrative staff, such as guidance counselors or assistant principals, and a MELS) and matching students to programs and services to address their needs. The PSS initiative was to establish a framework or tool that the MELS could use to assess individual students' needs, with a focus on students who were not scoring at the proficient level on district benchmark assessments. The assumption was that the framework would reveal patterns of need among students that could be addressed by groups of providers or programmatic strategies. The MELS was also expected to conduct parental outreach to increase student participation in these programs.

To support these school efforts, PSS would provide capacity-building opportunities to principals, MELS, and other staff, such as training in the use of the framework to assess student needs, assistance in developing partnerships, and individual coaching and consulting for the MELS and the principal. Further, Boston Beyond would facilitate networking among the MELS.

Program-Level Strategy. At the program level, PSS aimed to ensure that OST programs operating in PSS schools had clear goals aligned with those of the schools and the appropriate capacity to meet those goals. PSS sought to establish "essential elements for quality" by working in collaboration with providers. It also aimed to provide in-depth capacity building to a select group of providers (approximately 20). Some of the activities included an initial assessment to identify weaknesses in the organizations and subsequent provision of professional development for the staff, goal-setting sessions, and curriculum development. Furthermore, because many students were served by neighborhood-based programs instead of school programs due to the prevalence of busing in Boston, PSS aimed to include a small set of neighborhood-based programs in its capacity-building activities. These activities would work to match and align providers' and schools' needs. PSS also intended to provide support for the providers' capacity-building efforts (e.g., staff time associated with data collection or professional development).

To spur innovation and further strengthen programs, PSS would provide small innovation grants to support capacity building for OST providers.

System-Level Strategy. At the system level, PSS aimed to institutionalize the PSS approach in the city and BPS by facilitating public-sector support for the initiative and integrating PSS into BPS activities. For instance, the business plan proposed to integrate the PSS data system with the district's data system (MyBPS) and to advocate for strengthening the capacity of DELTAS. PSS also intended to establish a structure for private-public oversight and integrated funding and to provide infrastructure that would support the expansion of the PSS model, which would include a strategy for addressing transportation barriers.

Performance Monitoring Process and Systems. In support of the multiple elements of this strategy, PSS would develop an MI system to track participating students, such as a profile of students' strengths and needs, participation in programs and services, and indicators of socioemotional and behavioral progress. The system would facilitate communication about children, help partners monitor student progress, and foster program improvement and would be used for the evaluation of PSS.

Demonstration. The plan called for PSS to be piloted in five schools in the first year and to expand to five additional schools in each subsequent year of the Wallace grant. The 15 pilot schools would be selected from those in corrective action or restructuring through an RFP process.

Evaluation. The business plan called for a multiyear evaluation that was divided into two phases. Phase I focused on implementation and service quality in the first two years of the initiative, while Phase II would examine participant and system outcomes in the third year of the initiative.

Desired Outcomes. The goal of PSS was twofold: (1) to improve academic performance and development among children and (2) to enable systemwide adoption of the model.

Sustainment. The plan for sustainment included institutionalizing support within BPS to continue the model after the end of the grant.

Award. In 2006, The Wallace Foundation awarded Boston Beyond an $8 million, three-year implementation grant. The actual implementation began in September 2006.

Efforts Under the Implementation Grant

As described later, progress toward many PSS goals was slow, and some of the investments PSS made in tools, research, and information systems were set aside. During the first two years of the grant, Boston Beyond faced a number of staffing changes, including the resignation of its executive director. Further, there were many leadership changes in various city agencies—the superintendent, the head of the Department of Human Services, and the police commissioner, all of whom were ex-officio members of the Boston Beyond board. We were told by many interviewees that the relationship between Boston Beyond leadership and the mayor became strained. In late 2007, The Wallace Foundation had concerns about the progress of PSS and began a series of intense conversations with a variety of city leaders, including the staff in the mayor's office, BPS, and local foundations, about the future of the initiative.

These conversations led to the development of a new business plan, submitted to The Foundation in March 2008. We were told by several sources that the mayor's office, the superintendent's office, DELTAS, Boston Beyond, and other key city agencies engaged in the planning process. Respondents felt that the process and level of engagement would help reinvigorate the grant and set it up for success. Subsequently, new leadership took charge of the initiative, and interviewees reported that relationships improved.

This section details the city's OST efforts since the inception of the Wallace implementation grant, through May 2009. We first describe the functional design of the system after the Wallace grant and the mechanism used to coordinate activities. Then, we describe activities and efforts to increase access, improve quality, use data to drive decisionmaking, and develop a sustainment strategy. Although each activity is discussed in only one section, some activities supported multiple goals.

Functional Design

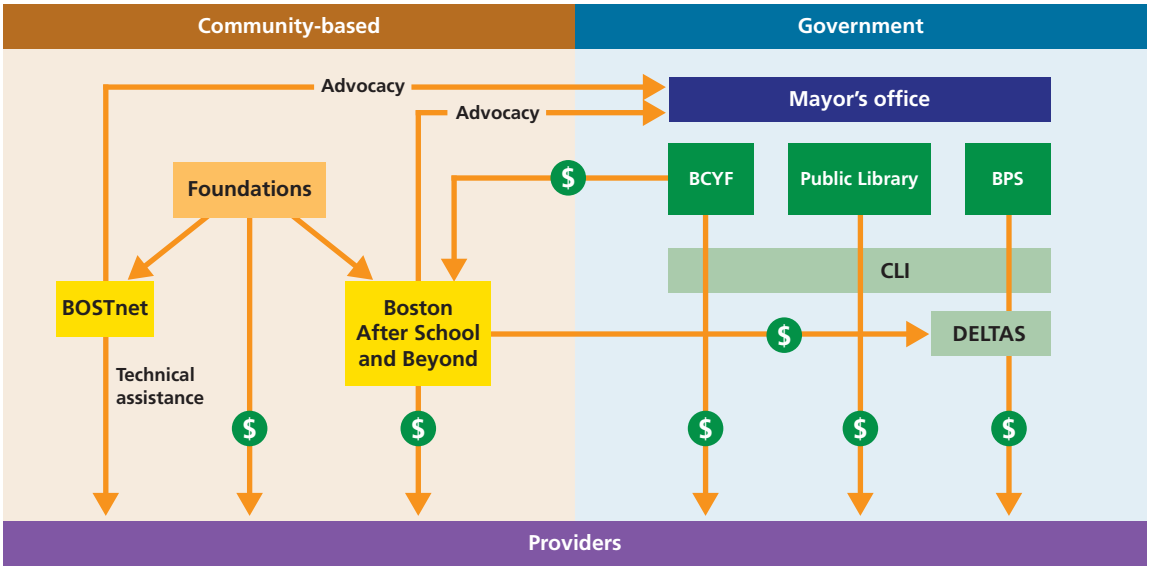
Few structural changes occurred since the grant; there was no major realignment of city agencies or organizations (see Figure 4.2). However, as of spring 2009, Boston Beyond provided funding to the Triumph Collaborative (which existed prior to the Wallace investment) to support PSS work. In addition, the city had piloted its Community Learning Initiative (CLI), announced in the mayor's 2008 state-of-the-city address.

Though not shown in the figure, Boston Beyond also acquired two youth coordinating organizations, the Boston Youth Environmental Network and the Boston Youth Sports Initiative, in early 2009, providing coordination, reach, and support to these OST providers.

Coordination

Before the new business plan was developed, a breakdown in coordination among key players occurred. Some respondents thought that BPS was not adequately involved with the initiative as implementation progressed. In particular, the DELTAS director did not sit on the PSS committee and had limited input in the higher-level decisionmaking, creating a gap between BPS strategy and implementation. Further, it appeared that Boston Beyond failed to communicate how the PSS initiative in 15 schools would lead to system improvements across the city. Interviews revealed that several representatives from organizations outside the PSS initiative lacked an understanding of the initiative and its systems goals. These individuals tended to conceive of PSS as a "boutique" program for ten schools. One respondent said that those in the field could not understand what the large grant was accomplishing. Transition in leadership may

Figure 4.2
Functional Design of OST in Boston After the Wallace Initiative



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have contributed to these issues. Over the first year and a half, PSS had three directors. This turnover affected relationships, management of program staff, and consistency in priorities and message. In addition, there were significant shifts in city leadership, including the superintendent, head of the city's Department of Human Services, and the police commissioner—all of whom were members of Boston Beyond's board.

Neighborhood Coordination. Initially, Boston Beyond was interested in engaging CBOs in students' home neighborhoods to increase the overall number of students at PSS schools attending any OST program, as many students attended schools outside their neighborhoods. While planning for the "neighborhood networks" did occur, the idea was not implemented and was placed on hold until the new business plan was developed. The mayor's CLI reinvigorated the idea of these neighborhood networks. The CLI's goals were to link BCYF community centers, BPS, and the Boston Public Library in the following ways:

- Align city-provided services and opportunities to make each more user-friendly and easily accessible to children, youth, and families.
- Expand opportunities available to youth by partnering with the city's many youth-oriented community organizations and institutions.
- Provide an enriching curriculum with access to arts, character building, education, and sports and recreation activities.
- Develop communication materials and vehicles that will make it easy for parents and youth to learn about, sign up for, and participate in community learning programs (Boston Public Schools, 2008).

The CLI initially focused on five neighborhoods in Boston. One respondent described how the initiative encouraged regular meetings to discuss how organizations could leverage each other's efforts. The meetings generally included principals and staff at the schools, the

children's librarian, the director of the community center, a staff member from the DELTAS office, and local community organizations. "Not that it [sharing common resources] didn't happen before, but it is a lot smoother," the interviewee added.

Agency Coordination. In April 2008, the mayor established the Education, Health, and Human Services Sub-Cabinet, which coordinated activities across various city agencies (e.g., BPS, [including DELTAS], Boston Public Health Commission, BCYF, Boston Public Library, and Human Services Cabinet). In addition to these agencies, the subcabinet also included Boston Beyond and leaders from two city initiatives, Thrive in Five and Read Boston. The mayor's chief of staff, with input from subcabinet members, set the agenda for monthly meetings. Partially due to the meetings and the CLI, coordination among BCYF, the Boston Public Health Commission, and DELTAS reportedly "mushroomed." The subcabinet identified a youth development strategy and discussed evaluation and measurement of OST on a citywide basis. Boston Beyond presented to the subcabinet on at least three occasions on such issues as PSS data, BOSTONavigator (the web-based OST program locator), and sectorwide activities.

Increasing Access and Participation

PSS Sites. A key goal of the PSS sites envisioned in the initial business plan was to increase access to programming for students in struggling schools, some of which lacked any OST programming prior to PSS. During the first year of the initiative, five pilot PSS sites were up and running. A second cohort of five PSS schools came on board in September 2007; these schools had no after-school programming prior to PSS. In 2008, 927 students were enrolled in after-school programs across the ten PSS sites.

In each of the PSS sites, the student population was predominantly minority and most of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. In addition, each school had failed to make adequate yearly progress under No Child Left Behind for at least three years, and eight schools were in restructuring (i.e., they failed to make adequate yearly progress for five years in a row). These schools all had a MELS, a full-time school-based professional, who worked as a liaison between the school and OST providers. However, each site developed its own program model based on the needs of its school community. Eight of the sites had CBOs in the role of lead partner and OST provider. Two sites managed their own after-school programs and had a range of partnerships with CBOs (i.e., there was no lead partner).

The PSS model called for assessing individual students' needs and working to address those needs by matching in-school trends to various OST programs and services. However, this level of sophisticated matching did not occur.

While the PSS model was very similar to the Triumph Collaborative model, a consortium of schools managed by the DELTAS, these efforts were not initially integrated. DELTAS provided coaching support to MELS and helped with the principals' network (described later), but some respondents perceived that PSS was intended to stand outside the DELTAS Triumph Collaborative. This increased the perception that PSS was a boutique program rather than a systemic effort.

The new business plan integrated the PSS sites into the DELTAS Triumph Collaborative in the 2008–2009 school year, and the focus of the work under the grant expanded to include all Triumph Collaborative schools. In 2008–2009, DELTAS assumed operational responsibility for implementing the initiative. This shift, though not initially intended, aligned with the original goal of the grant: to create lessons learned across all the sites that could then be

exported to other schools in BPS to bridge the divide between school and after-school. As one respondent put it,

> It's really about how you support the young person, how do you support the child. . . . It is really about how do you use every minute you have intentionally, how do you use every resource intentionally, to meet the full breadth of what that young person needs to be successful, and OST is just a time of day when you could be doing that work. It is more important to talk about what the student's needs are and what the work itself is, not the time of day when it happens, right? It really plunks us much more into looking at a more seamless-day approach.

Several respondents at PSS schools indicated that there was active information sharing and cooperation on resource usage between individuals in the school, the after-school program, and members of the community. One PSS principal described it as follows: "My classroom teachers meet once a week, and the after-school coordinator comes to those meetings—not every month but a number of times—to talk about specific students and also understand how school time and OST activities [are] related." In addition, student support teams, which existed in all Boston schools (and usually consisted of the principal, teachers, and a special education professional), started to incorporate after-school coordinators as well to get a more complete sense of the students and how they were being engaged. In several PSS schools, the relationship between after-school and in-school time reportedly significantly improved. As one respondent said,

> As rich as Boston is with resources, it is a fractured system. Oftentimes, organizations that are adjacent to each other and should talk to each other do not talk. It is a process. Where it has been successful, there has been incredible growth in terms of quality and number of students served.

BOSTONavigator. In collaboration with BOSTnet and the mayor's office, Boston Beyond worked to develop a centralized program-level database, BOSTONavigator, to include all OST program sectors. BOSTONavigator, launched in October 2007, combined data from a number of existing databases—BOSTnet's database of around 600 OST programs, a city database, and databases for arts and culture, environmental, and sports programs. Through BOSTONavigator, parents, youth workers, and the general public could access detailed information about programming anywhere in Boston, email a set of results, and find programs on a map. As of May 2009, BOSTONavigator listed data on 613 organizations offering 1,600 programs. OST program operators were to self-update the program information and clean the existing data. Boston Beyond offered support to providers to set up their profiles, and several key foundations and CBOs supporting OST began to require grant applicants to be listed in the system. Furthermore, the city was an active supporter of BOSTONavigator, with the mayor specifically mentioning it on several occasions. All of these actions encouraged participation.

In 2009, Boston Beyond was working to refine the system to be more user-friendly by allowing individuals to search for programs within a radius of a location in addition to zip code and improving the input interface.

Boston Beyond leadership reported using data generated from BOSTONavigator to inform discussions with city leaders and funders, such as program supply by type of activity, age groups served, and locations of programs offered in the summer and during the school year.

Improving Quality

In this section, we first describe the activities undertaken to improve quality in the first two years of the Wallace grant. Some of these activities were set aside in favor of others, also described, under the reinvigorated plan.

Capacity-Building Grants. Boston Beyond made capacity-building grants to the ten PSS sites totaling $542,000 in 2007. According to the revised business plan, the grants supported activities in the following areas:

- coordinator positions, which were overseen by the lead partner, to manage the programs and allow the MELS to focus on strategic partnerships, sustainability, alignment, and overall program quality
- professional development and planning time for staff
- family engagement workshops, events, and materials
- strategies to increase alignment between in-school and out-of-school time and improve the quality of homework time
- partnerships with individuals or organizations to provide enhanced programming in a critical content area (such as science)
- program materials and curricula.

Principals' Network. PSS established a principals' network that consisted of principals from the ten PSS sites who were brought together to share experiences and to network. MELS were also invited to the meetings. However, we were told that they rarely attended.

Child Assessment Tool. Boston Beyond contracted with the Children's Hospital Neighborhood Partnership in March 2007 to develop an individualized child-assessment tool to help the PSS schools better target their OST programming to the needs of students. The assessment consisted of 62 items that measured children across social, emotional, behavioral, academic, and health dimensions. The tool was developed with the intention that teachers would fill out the assessment for each of their students, which took an estimated 15 minutes per student. This plan would have required teacher union approval, however, so the tool was used instead by student support teams in certain PSS schools.

Standards and Quality-Assessment Tools. Boston Beyond contracted with HighScope to tailor the HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA) for Boston. The PQA was used for self- and external assessments of sites to reveal strengths and weaknesses. Boston Beyond selected the tool because it was valid and tested. However, we were told that the tool was very labor-intensive and that some people outside Boston Beyond and the PSS schools were not enthusiastic about it. For instance, it required an hour-long observation and then took another hour to combine scores and prepare the results for data entry. Boston Beyond staff recognized that sites needed to maintain a high level of readiness to appropriately use the tool. As one respondent commented, it set "a very high standard." Boston Beyond staff developed a shortened version of the PQA at the request of several MELS and after-school coordinators. In the 2008–2009 school year, the PQA was administered to the ten PSS schools.

As of spring 2009, DELTAS used the Program Improvement and Quality Protocol (PiQ), which monitored both compliance and quality-improvement efforts. The questionnaire documented, for example, grant requirements, program quality, site observations, professional development participation, and pre/post surveys of teachers and after-school staff on students enrolled in the program. One assessment of quality included in the PiQ was the "Roadmap,"

a self-administered checklist of characteristics associated with program quality. It consisted of six areas, or guideposts. For each guidepost, users rated themselves on the following scale: aware of importance, progressing toward indicator, meeting indicator, and able to share lessons learned. In 2008–2009, data from the PiQ were used to help school-CBO collaborations understand their strengths and areas for improvement and to support improvement planning. Data from the PiQ process helped identify a clear and focused set of priorities for improvement for Triumph Collaborative schools, which then guided DELTAS support of each school site.

Interviewees expressed mixed reviews of the Roadmap's usefulness for measuring quality. Another key component of the PiQ was tracking individuals' completion of the Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAYO). The SAYO used brief pre- and post-participation surveys of after-school staff for each program participant. The surveys asked about a variety of outcomes (e.g., behavior, relations with peers and adults, homework, academic performance). The PiQ also tracked observational tools, such as the Assessing Afterschool Program Practices Tool, which included observation and a questionnaire with items asking whether there was a positive program environment, which practices supported individualized needs and interests, whether there were supportive relationships, and which practices stimulated engagement. All the state's 21st Century Learning Centers used the tool and linked these results to the outcomes measured in the SAYO.

Sharing Information Across Sites. During the first two years of the initiative, MELS met monthly with DELTAS staff to share their experiences across the various sites. In the 2008–2009 school year, DELTAS launched its Small Learning Communities initiative. Each month, the meetings focused on various core issues, such as improving quality or entrepreneurial partnerships. Coordinators across the Triumph Collaborative chose issues that were particularly relevant for their schools and communities. Several participants indicated that they found these more focused meetings quite effective and helpful, although only about half the schools participated in Small Learning Communities. Finally, in the third year of the grant, DELTAS created TRIspace, a social networking site for members of the Triumph Collaborative that provided information about training and professional development opportunities, potential resources, and posted successes and failures in their area.

Coaches. DELTAS employed coaches, funded through the Wallace grant, to assist school site coordinators in a variety of capacities (e.g., parent engagement, leadership and supervision, curriculum, supporting English language learners). Each coach oversaw between five and ten schools. One respondent described the coach as follows:

> [The coach] is extremely good at helping to professionalize what we do here. . . . He comes to partner meetings, [and] I meet [someone] at a networking event and my coach says, "Let me draft the MOU or work plan so there is a paper trail," or other things that a lot of times schools or community organizations tend to gloss over.

Universally, interviewees found the coaching extremely helpful.

Citywide Standards. It was noted that the subcabinet had begun talking about quality standards. From an initial list of 40 developmental assets, the group decided to focus on eight that were common across various programs in the city. At the time of our last visit, it was working on a results framework to identify citywide outcomes and expected that a document would be produced in June 2010.

Using Data to Improve Decisionmaking: Management Information System Development and Implementation

Between 2006 and spring 2009, Boston made two efforts to implement an MI system to collect OST information from its school-based programs. In 2007, Boston Beyond selected Cayen as its web-based MI system vendor. The Cayen system was used in each of the ten PSS sites to track program enrollment and attendance; it did not link to other school data. We were told that, after reviewing a variety of systems, Boston Beyond selected Cayen because BPS was also considering using the system to track SES, additional tutoring provided to low-income children, and participation. However, BPS never adopted the Cayen system and only the ten PSS sites used it.

When responsibility for the coordination work in the initiative shifted to DELTAS in 2008, it decided to switch the MI system in favor of a direct link (maintained internally to BPS) to the public school data system. As a result, DELTAS decided to design an interface in coordination with the BPS Office of Instructional and Information Technology so that information collected on children in the after-school programs (e.g., participation) could be linked to data in the BPS system (e.g., grades, test scores).

DELTAS expected its DELTAS Management Information System (DELTAS MIS) to be used to create and update programs that were serving BPS students in various schools in the system, enroll and withdraw students in programs, store program attendance, and identify priority students (referrals). The system would permit site-based coordinators to link school data to after-school data and thus provide better tracking of students. Improved tracking would facilitate the ability to determine individual student needs and progress. DELTAS MIS was described by one interviewee as follows:

> The [management information system] promises to be a whole school tool. It is more than just attendance tracking; it is a whole-school approach. Connecting OST to outcomes. We can see how after-school participation relates to attendance, which connects to GPA. We also want it to connect to referrals. If Malik is having a bad day, and I find out that he has had a death in the family, I can refer him to someone else, and the DELTAS MIS will have that information and will send out a reminder to follow up about that referral.

DELTAS hired an independent contractor to build the interface with the BPS system. The goal was to have the system operational in the Triumph Collaborative sites by October 2008. However, the contractor did not meet expected deadlines, and the system was not operational until January 2009. When coordinators tried to use the new system, they found that it was incredibly slow due to limited server capacity. For example, we were told that it could take 30 minutes to enroll a student on the system. Consequently, DELTAS asked site-based coordinators to continue to submit written attendance sheets, which were then entered into the system by DELTAS staff. Because there was no MI system in use by providers or coordinators during the time of our study, no provider survey was conducted in Boston. As of spring 2009, DELTAS staff were working to resolve server capacity issues and other bugs in the system and expected DELTAS MIS to be fully operational for OST programming by the 2009–2010 school year.

In addition to the school-based MI system being developed, BCYF issued an RFP for a web-based MI system to track participation in Boston's community centers. This was the MI system that would be used at the CLI sites as well. BCYF was interested in an MI system to help it monitor and foster program improvement. BCYF selected KidTrax, which was piloted during the 2008–2009 school year, and planned to roll out the system in fall 2009. The community centers planned to issue member cards and use scan-card technology to track attendance. BCYF also reported plans to use an outcome measurement module in KidTrax to help monitor quality. We were told that an additional benefit of KidTrax was that the United Way and Boys and Girls Clubs in Boston used KidTrax, which could assist with data sharing in the future.

Training and Technical Assistance. DELTAS provided training and ongoing support for the use of DELTAS MIS.[2] All users were required to attend an initial training session for the system and were furnished with a pamphlet containing screenshots that showcased the system's capability. DELTAS also continued to field phone calls during the debugging process, and officials there expressed plans to link the DELTAS MIS training to other training and support efforts currently under way. For instance, Triumph Collaborative schools received support and training in the use of various tools to collect student-, program-, and activity-level outcomes as part of an overall assessment system. Some of the training on the use of DELTAS MIS was expected to be conducted by DELTAS through the Small Learning Communities, in which some of the schools in the Triumph Collaborative participated monthly.

Future Steps. Boston was investigating the possibility of developing a citywide system in which children and youth used a single card to access various services through schools, libraries, community centers, and public transit. However, leaders in Boston noted that this would likely not be adopted during the next couple of years due to budget constraints.

Eventually, Boston would like to be able to merge data from multiple systems for systemic planning. For instance, data from DELTAS MIS and KidTrax could be linked to investigate outcomes of different types of programming on certain youth outcomes. Another idea for data merging was to link data from DELTAS MIS and KidTrax to the city OST program locator, BOSTONavigator, to provide data on, for example, the number of slots filled and average attendance per day.

Using Data to Improve Decisionmaking: Research and Evaluation

Research Activities. Boston Beyond invested in an evaluation of its efforts and commissioned a study of systemic cost. The business plan called for a longitudinal evaluation, but Boston Beyond suspended it after the first year. Sources at Boston Beyond said that the evaluation was discontinued because some felt it was too early in the initiative to have an evaluation, particularly given the level of capacity building in a couple of the PSS sites. In addition, Boston Beyond was facing staffing and programming changes. It had also commissioned a study to examine the costs associated with OST systems.

Developing a Sustainment Strategy

Boston Beyond's cost study was commissioned as a method to inform decisions about sustainability. However, the subsequent report was considered "not helpful," although one respondent

[2] Because there were no data from the MI system at the time of data collection, we do not discuss data accuracy, and no providers were surveyed as part of the study.

said that the findings did influence the revised business plan. Interviewees seemed concerned about sustainability, especially given that BPS laid off approximately 6 percent of its workforce in July 2009. BPS and the city were considering several funding options. Many of the sites made efforts to find larger, more established lead partners, such as the YMCA or the Boys and Girls Club, and have them bring "resources to the table." DELTAS staff were working on a 21st Century grant for the 2009–2010 school year. In addition, Triumph Collaborative sites were working with the philanthropic community to garner further support. With respect to the prospects of eventually scaling up the model to schools outside the Triumph Collaborative, some respondents felt that there would be financial barriers to hiring a MELS for every school but that a MELS could potentially oversee activities at several schools. Some thought that professional development, such as for the coaches, or networks formed through the CLI, could become a lasting legacy of the initiative.

Enablers and Challenges to Implementation

Leadership. Boston experienced personnel problems that hindered progress, including changes in key leadership positions. At the city level, we were told that changes in leadership at the Department of Human Services, BCYF, BPS, and the Boston Police Department were disruptive to progress, as these individuals all sat on Boston Beyond's board.

Further, Boston Beyond experienced turnover: Over the first year and a half of the initiative, three people served as PSS director and the executive director of Boston Beyond resigned. During our first visit to Boston in May 2008, only one person had been at Boston Beyond since the beginning of the initiative.

Lack of Communication and Coordination. Interviewees reported that Boston Beyond did not effectively engage and inform the OST community about how the initiative would lead to systemic improvements in OST provision in the city. Instead, respondents outside of the PSS initiative said that program providers could not understand why $8 million had been invested in OST but was not supporting any significant programming in the community. By not adequately reaching out to the community and articulating a clear, citywide vision for PSS, Boston Beyond further isolated itself. Thus, the PSS initiative became viewed as a boutique program.

In addition, prior to the development of the new business plan, some respondents thought that BPS, and particularly DELTAS, was not adequately involved with the initiative as implementation progressed. The DELTAS director did not sit on the PSS committee and had limited input into higher-level decisionmaking, which created a gap between BPS strategy and PSS implementation (Boston After School and Beyond, 2008).

Mayoral Support. The mayor had always been a strong advocate of OST programming and led the charge to create Boston Beyond. While the mayor remained committed to OST in the city, interviewees reported that the priorities of the mayor and the prior executive director of Boston Beyond became unaligned in the first two years of the PSS initiative. From their vantage point, the mayor appeared to lose confidence in the intermediary's leadership, making it difficult for Boston Beyond to lead system-building efforts.

Interviewees reported that, since the business plan's revision in spring 2008 and the hiring of a new executive director for Boston Beyond in October 2008, the mayor's support has been strong. His chief of staff, a key player during the transition period, joined the Boston Beyond

board of directors in May 2009. The mayor and superintendent have spoken at every public Boston Beyond event. In addition, we were told that the mayor's strong support of the CLI, both verbally and financially, strengthened coordination among BCYF, the Boston Public Library, BPS, and some community organizations. In fact, he made OST a top campaign issue in his reelection bid.

CHAPTER FIVE

Chicago

Introduction

In 2006, Chicago was awarded a Wallace Foundation grant for $8 million over three years as part of an effort to better integrate OST program provision in the city. The goal was to coordinate OST provision among the city's five main sources of youth OST programming: the Department of Children and Youth Services (CYS, which later became the Department of Family and Support Services [FSS]), After School Matters (ASM), the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), and the Chicago Public Library (CPL). Coordination focused on five strategies, or "pillars": information, communication, innovation, quality, and sustainability. Early coordination efforts focused on the information pillar and implementation of an MI system (Cityspan), in particular. Later coordination efforts included a program improvement pilot launched in fall 2008 and other activities. Chicago secured additional funding commitments from The Wallace Foundation for coordination activities through 2012. This chapter reflects the progress and status of activities as of May 2009.

Local Context

In 2005, Chicago was the nation's third-largest city, with a population of more than 2.8 million people, and had the third-largest public school district in the country (see Table 5.1). The school district faced distinct challenges, as 74 percent of its students came from low-income families.

OST Sector Prior to The Wallace Foundation Initiative

Chicago was nationally known for ASM, a teen-focused initiative that grew out of Gallery 37, an arts-related job-training program in the early 1990s. ASM was chaired by Margaret Daley, Mayor Richard M. Daley's wife. A vacant city block (known as block 37) was converted into an outdoor art studio where professional artists taught their skills to teens. In 2000, the job-training program changed its name to After School Matters and expanded to fields beyond the arts, including sports, technology, and writing. It also expanded its program to schools, libraries, and parks throughout Chicago. The vision remained the same throughout ASM's program offerings: local professionals helping teens develop marketable job skills and showcase their talents. Teens take on apprenticeships, can qualify to earn a stipend, and are paired with an expert in the community. ASM was nationally recognized as a model for teen skill provision,

Table 5.1
Chicago Demographic Information, 2005

Characteristic	Value
Population[a]	2,836,800
Youth population (under 18)[b]	26.3%
Median household income[b]	$41,015
Individual poverty rate[b]	21.3%
Public K–12 enrollment[c]	420,982
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[c]	74.2%
Citywide attendance rate (average)[d]	92.1%
Number of schools in need of improvement/total number of schools[e]	349/652

[a] Estimate for 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.

[b] Data from 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005.

[c] Data for 2005–2006 school year; Garofano, Sable, and Hoffman, 2008.

[d] Data for 2005–2006 school year; Chicago Public Schools, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability, 2006.

[e] Data from 2005; Chicago Public Schools, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability, 2008.

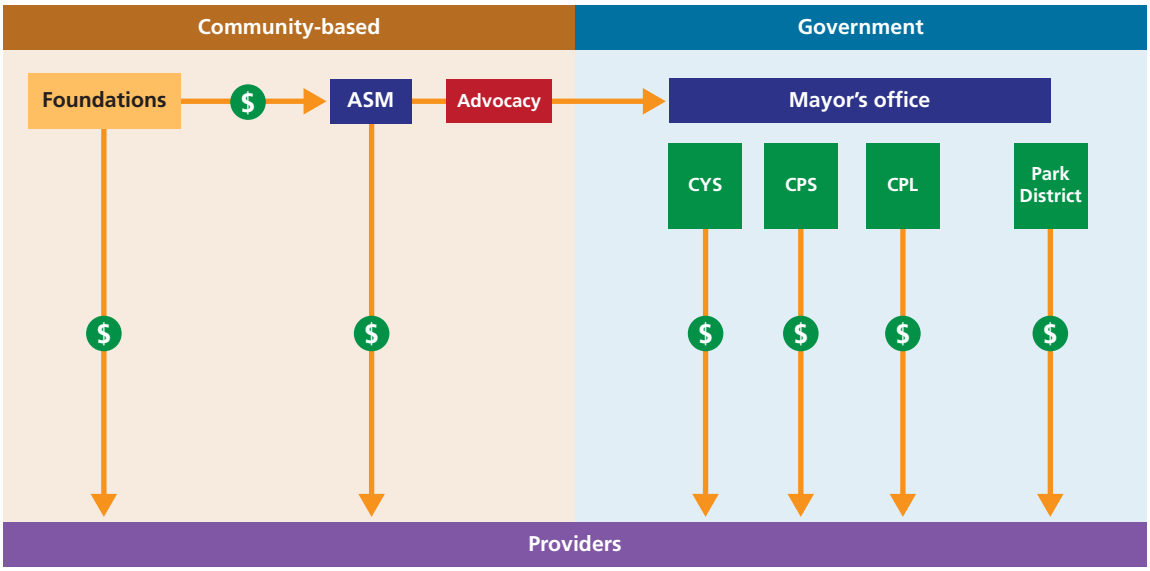
job training, and OST programming. In addition, ASM acted as an advocate for high-quality programming for teens.

In addition to ASM, four large government organizations supported the bulk of OST programming in Chicago without any coordination (as indicated in Figure 5.1 by the absence of connecting arrows among these agencies).

- The Chicago Park District is an independent sovereign body that has the ability to raise its own taxes. The Park District offered a variety of OST programming for youth in its parks and recreation centers throughout the city.
- CYS funded organizations that operated OST programs for youth ages 6–18 and Chicago's summer job programs for youth.
- CPS supported after-school programming through its Office of Extended Learning Opportunities. The office was established in September 2001 to help schools by offering a variety of high-quality programs that supported academic instruction and enriched the development of children outside the regular school day. It supported three categories of after-school programs: academics, enrichment, and community schools. Collectively, these programs serve approximately 200,000 students in more than 500 elementary and high schools.
- CPL provided OST programming for children and youth at its central location and in 76 branch libraries across the cities.

Figure 5.1 shows that foundations were major funders of ASM and direct funders of specific providers. ASM advocated for better provision generally and specifically by working with the mayor's office. While the funding agencies were quite unique and independent in terms of mission and priorities, one characteristic that all four organizations had in common was

Figure 5.1
Functional Design of OST in Chicago Prior to the Wallace Initiative



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that provision of OST opportunities for youth was not their primary focus: Each provided other types of programming or served other target populations. Also, each organization pieced together funding for OST programs for youth from various sources.

While several OST programs were funded and provided by these city agencies and ASM, the city's overall OST programming remained fragmented until 2006. In fact, Chicago faced a number of challenges just prior to implementation of the Wallace-funded coordination effort in 2006 (Chicago Public Schools, 2006, p. i). Some of the problems noted by coordinators were

- lack of teen participation in OST programming
- lack of capacity to meet potential demand (e.g., if more students wanted to participate, there would not be enough OST seats to meet demand)
- no systemic mechanisms for quality assessment or quality improvement in OST programs
- a large number of independent providers not functioning in a coherent fashion.

The Wallace-funded OST initiative provided an opportunity to enhance citywide coordination of OST programs. Until the possibility of funding materialized, serious and sustained coordination among the five main funders of OST was not the norm in Chicago.

History of The Wallace Foundation Initiative

The mayor's wife, as the chair of ASM, and leaders from CYS and Chapin Hall, a research center at the University of Chicago, led the discussions with The Wallace Foundation about possible funding, and the group convened its Steering Committee, made up of the heads of the

relevant city agencies and ASM.[1] Faculty from the University of Chicago drafted the initial proposal with assistance from a CPS demographer on sections about the proposed MI system.

Goals

The overarching goal of the Steering Committee in the initial proposal to The Wallace Foundation was to create an integrated, citywide system of OST provision. One respondent said,

> They [Wallace] talked about having a system, and Chicago doesn't have one. We have a rich history of the settlement house, but there's never been coordination between schools, settlement houses, parks, and libraries. When ASM came on the scene, some limited coordination was taking place. But in order to find out what was happening in the library down the street or the parks system, you just couldn't do it.

Another said that although the partners were very different, their interest in providing quality programming to youth in Chicago bound them together:

> Each of the five partners has a complex set of constraints: legal, fiscal, and regulatory. They have huge budgets and staffing, and lots of different program models. And each model has different definitional outcomes. But they are all trying to do the same things: maximize resources under the same mayor for the common purpose of impacting kids.

Steering Committee members acknowledged that system-building efforts would be difficult and slower to implement than pouring funds into immediate program expansion. However, they also felt that a systemic approach had the best chance of improving Chicago's OST provision in the long run.

The Plan

The partners in Chicago agreed to organize system-building activities under five major improvement strategies:

- Implement an information technology system that could be shared across all OST partners and providers.
- Develop a communication plan to target and reach teens.
- Develop and disseminate innovative best practices across all program providers.
- Pilot a consistent way to measure and ensure OST program quality.
- Develop strategies for long-term financing leading to sustainable OST programming and infrastructure in Chicago.

Chicago's initial proposed focus was on the "information" pillar. It was argued that getting MI systems up and running quickly would better enable implementation of the other four pillars. One interviewee explained, "You can't build a system without understanding who's in it. The [MI system] is an essential component to understanding your foundation: who you are serving."

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[1] The information in this section is derived from Chicago's business plan that was submitted to The Wallace Foundation (Chicago Public Schools, 2006).

Additionally, leaders thought that the MI systems would provide a very tangible reward to partners for their cooperation and commitment. Because the partners had institutional interests in building such a system for themselves, it was a logical first topic for the coordination effort to tackle. As another interviewee put it, "We started with [MI systems] because it's the easiest. None of the other priorities could be set up so fast. And if you want someone to play in the sandbox, give them the toys and they will play well."

Award

In 2006, based on the strength of the proposal and support from the mayor and major funders in Chicago, The Wallace Foundation granted Chicago a three-year, $8 million grant to implement the four key strategies.

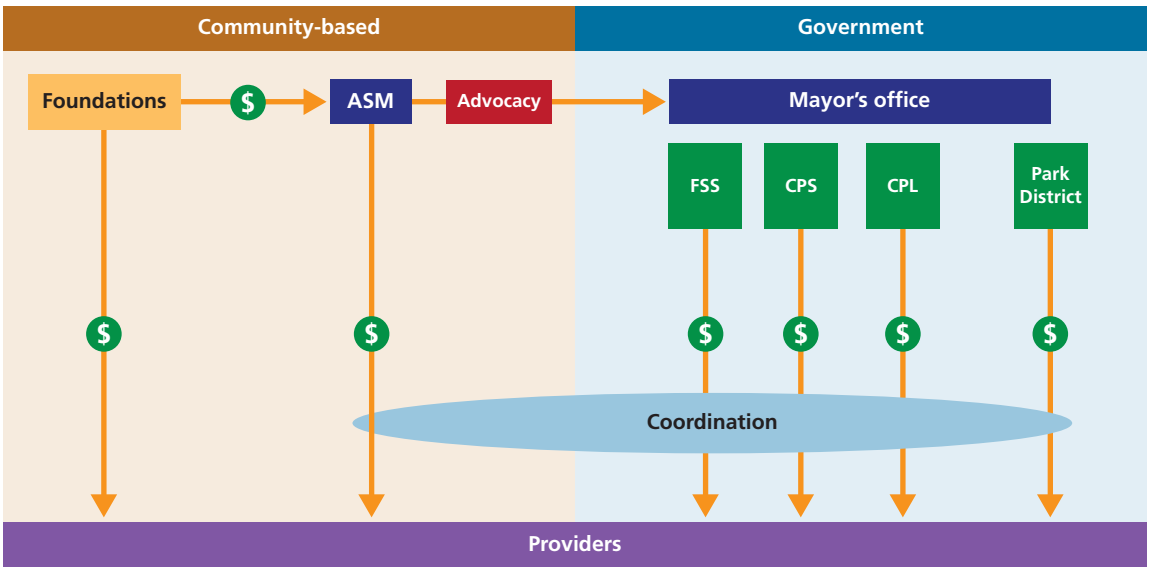
Efforts Under the Implementation Grant

This section details the city's OST efforts since the inception of the Wallace implementation grant, through May 2009. We first discuss the functional design of the system after the Wallace grant and the mechanism used to coordinate activities. Then, we describe activities and efforts to increase access, improve quality, use data to drive decisionmaking, and develop a sustainment strategy. Although each activity is discussed in only one section, some activities supported multiple goals.

Functional Design

The functional structure of Chicago's OST provision did not change significantly as a result of the grant (see Figure 5.2). At the end of our study, the organizations were the same as before, had the same responsibilities, and maintained the same relationships with each other. CYS was

Figure 5.2
Functional Design of OST in Chicago After the Wallace Initiative



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part of restructuring within the city agencies and was renamed Family and Support Services, or FSS. It led the initiative in terms of ensuring coordination among the government agencies (as represented in the figure by the blue oval). This formal coordination included executive, leadership, and steering committees from across the city agencies, whose members met regularly.

Coordination

Per the planning grant proposal, FSS led the work of the initiative. Because The Wallace Foundation does not fund government entities directly, ASM received the grant.

The primary mechanisms for coordination were meetings involving high-level members from each of the partner agencies, excluding agency directors. The Leadership Committee met on the first Thursday of each month (although a 2009 interviewee suggested that these meetings had become less regular since the summer of 2008) and focused on "the nitty-gritty" of coordination between the partners to ensure buy-in of joint OST initiatives and to track implementation progress. The Leadership Committee was only one of many such committees in the Chicago Out-of-School Time Project but one repeatedly cited as doing the majority of the work in terms of system building and interagency communication. Other committees met regularly in connection with Chicago's OST project and contributed to interagency collaboration. These committees included the following:

- Partners for Advancing OST, formerly known as the Steering Committee, met twice a year to review work completed to date. The committee included the directors of the partner agencies and was co-chaired by the mayor's wife and the head of FSS.
- Executive Committee, which included leaders from FSS and the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall, as well as the former CPS demographer, met twice a month with the project director to make operational and directional decisions to the OST project.
- "Pillar" subcommittees were created to focus on the quality, communication, sustainability, and information pillars but, in many cases, did not meet regularly. Each subcommittee was chaired by the OST project director.

Increasing Access and Participation

Communication Pillar. The Chicago Out-of-School Time Project hired an outside organization to build an online program locator using data collected from the MI systems. The portal was rolled out to the public in September 2008, allowing parents and youth to search more than 1,000 OST program sites and 12,000 OST program activities by location and program type. According to Chicago OST project data, as of spring 2009, more than 10,000 unique users had visited the site since its launch (Chicago Out-of-School Time Project, 2009). Some respondents commented on how valuable the locator was in matching youth with programs in Chicago. As one source at CPS explained, "We get a lot of calls from parents, and the locator website has been a great resource to share. This has helped our communications with parents. We can direct them now. It has a list of what is in that area so that is fantastic."

In addition to the program locator, an outside firm designed a marketing and communication strategy, including toolkits and training to help OST providers encourage "hard-to-reach" teens to participate in OST programs. In addition, leaders from the Chicago Public Library developed specific programming and materials to encourage teen participation in programs.

Improving Quality

Program Quality Pillar. Chicago implemented a program-improvement pilot initiative in September 2009 in 43 OST program sites: two CPS sites, four ASM sites, four library sites, eight Chicago Park District sites, and 25 FSS sites. The pilot consisted of peer coaching, a self-administered program assessment, and an external assessment. Based on these assessments, program staff and their coaches developed and implemented a program-improvement plan. The assessment tool used was a version of HighScope's Youth Program Quality Assessment, which was customized for Chicago. The Chicago Area Project, a private, nonprofit organization focused on preventing delinquency and serving disadvantaged urban youth, provided technical assistance and training to the pilot sites and oversaw the external evaluation process.

The Youth Program Quality Assessment introduced quality standards in four categories: safe environment, supportive environment, interaction, and engagement. In speaking with providers participating in the pilot and other sources, one universal observation was that providers in the pilot could diagnose and easily fix program areas in the first two categories (safe and supportive environment), but they needed much more assistance and, in some cases, training to assess and develop concrete steps to improve the higher-order categories (youth interaction and engagement). Leaders felt that professional development should therefore focus on these higher-order standards more so than on creating a safe and supportive environment.

Respondents in Chicago stressed that the program-improvement initiative was not a set of mandated program standards to which all OST programs in the city must adhere. Multiple interviewees suggested that imposing standards from above would engender resistance on the part of providers in Chicago due to a history of distrust and enmity between funders and program providers. Instead, the initiative was presented as a nonrequired opportunity for program staff to receive professional development and learn methods for improving their programs. Program providers we interviewed who chose to participate in the pilot were quite positive about the process and found the professional development very helpful.

According to the Chicago Out-of-School Time Project's proposal for its second phase, the next step in the pilot of the program-improvement initiative was to form a quality advisory group consisting of staff from the main project members (CPS, Park District, ASM, FSS, and CPL), plus content experts and other key stakeholders, to (1) examine the program pilot and decide whether the program was ready to roll out to providers citywide and, if so, (2) to determine how a broad rollout would be funded and implemented. Some sources were unclear about whether sustainable resources would be found to scale up the improvement pilot and cited as evidence a prior quality standards initiative (the Chicago Youth Program Standards) that failed to be funded.

Innovation Pillar. The OST project helped expand ASM's Ladder of Opportunity, an apprentice/internship program that provided youth with career-related skills and experiences, to include new content areas and new corporate partners. During this expansion, ASM and the OST project documented the process in order to share resources and lessons learned with local and national audiences interested in developing similar teen skill-training programs. By expanding its model to include advanced-level internships, ASM continued to receive national recognition as a leader in teen OST programming.

Using Data to Improve Decisionmaking: Management Information System Development and Implementation

The Chicago Out-of-School Time Project selected Cityspan to help design and implement a "program and participant tracking system" during the first year of the project. Prior to using Cityspan, the collection of information from various program providers was inconsistent from one partner to the next, and collected data were not shared outside individual agencies. Participating agencies felt that Cityspan could meet most of their individual needs as well as those of the group, assisting in developing a sense of cohesion among so many unique and independent partners.

Chicago's goals in implementing Cityspan were to collect enrollment and attendance data on OST provision in a consistent and easily accessible manner and to provide data to assist with planning, developing, and monitoring programs. Although Wallace Foundation funding helped pay for the initial implementation, training, some hardware, and customization, responsibility for ongoing use and maintenance of Cityspan rested with each city partner.

Cityspan worked with the first project director, who had extensive expertise in MI system development, and representatives from the partner agencies to design a set of systems that could capture 1,298 OST sites, 25,000 program activities, and 380,000 teens each year (Chicago Out-of-School Time Project, 2008, p. 13). Although many data-tracking functions were standardized across the partner sites, Cityspan and the project director worked to customize the system for each partner. One key activity was that each agency outlined its goals and purpose so that data collection would match and support those agency objectives. For example, FSS, ASM, and CPS wanted the capability to post and collect RFPs through Cityspan and to use it to monitor budgets, stipends, and invoices. The Park District was not interested in adding these capabilities.

Implementation at each city agency involved creating a phased implementation plan, developing and testing the system with staff, and offering phased training to provide optimal support for the staff.

The decision was made to target FSS, Park District, and CPS sites first for Cityspan implementation, beginning with a voluntary pilot program. None of these three agencies had a web-based MI system. Since ASM already had a functioning MI system, it was not targeted for early implementation. By mid-2007, an MI system was in use by selected FSS and Chicago Park District sites. Throughout 2007, staff attended training sessions to learn how to enter and report data and run reports on project-provided computers. By October 2007, all the partners except CPL had begun implementing the MI system, gathering requirements, and designing service modules.[2] By early 2008, 469 OST sites had been brought online, more than 500 staff members had received training, and approximately 3,800 program activities and 42,000 youth were captured by agencies' MI systems.

In 2008, implementation continued to the point where the majority of CPS and FSS OST providers were using Cityspan. Thirty Park District sites were also using Cityspan, with plans for implementation at an additional 80 locations that needed to be wired for high-speed Internet access.

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[2] CPL had already begun implementing an integrated library system, so it was reluctant to implement a parallel system. It also had concerns about privacy and was hesitant to collect demographic information on library patrons and track individual participation in library programs. The OST team worked with library staff in 2008 to integrate data from the libraries' system with the program and participant tracking system.

By 2009, all of the approximately 200 FSS providers were using Cityspan, and nearly all CPS-funded OST programs were being captured in the system. Approximately 120 Park District sites were also using Cityspan—virtually all the parks that had been successfully wired for high-speed Internet access. ASM piloted Cityspan at selected program sites and was preparing for broader implementation of the system. Respondents described Cityspan's capacity for meeting the needs of individual agencies as a valued feature. The most customized and, perhaps, complex modifications were at ASM, which planned to use the MI system to track instructor and participant surveys, teen applications, instructor RFPs, instructor payment and invoices, and perhaps teen stipends.

In Chicago, each OST provider was responsible for inputting the data generated by its program. An FSS youth services coordinator supported and monitored FSS-funded sites, including the Cityspan data. For CPS, onsite resource coordinators (full-time staff in community schools) or program coordinators (part-time staff tasked with overseeing specific OST programs who were often teachers from the school) entered and managed the data. Park District staff at participating locations entered data. In general, city agencies expected providers to enter data on at least a weekly basis. Agency sources described some variation in terms of regular data entry among providers: Some input data daily and others got around to it only once a month. As one interviewee put it, "The system is still quite new, and we are not quite there yet in terms of 100-percent on-time data entry." For the Park District, a large percentage of program attendees did not register until the first day, which we were told sometimes led to a backlog of registration data.

Next, we address issues of data accuracy, training and technical assistance, data linkages and sharing, use of MI system data, challenges faced, and future steps.

Data Accuracy. Overall, sources in Chicago reported that data in Cityspan were fairly accurate, particularly attendance data. City agencies used their MI systems to produce reports that diagnosed inaccurate data, and the systems included built-in self-checking features that minimized error (e.g., mechanisms to check the validity of a student address).

According to city officials, another factor that helped ensure data accuracy was the fact that Cityspan was web-based, and providers were able to access the database on any computer with an Internet connection. Many previous attendance systems, particularly for CPS programs, were housed on a school or other OST site computer and could be accessed only on that computer. This meant that when the computer was being used for another purpose, data entry could not take place. Sometimes data entry was postponed for this reason, leading to more error-prone data. With Cityspan accessible via the web, we were told that providers could more consistently enter data. In fact, in our provider survey, approximately 76 percent of FSS-funded providers reported entering attendance data on at least a weekly basis.[3]

Training and Technical Assistance. Significant resources were devoted to training and technical assistance during Cityspan implementation in Chicago. The Chicago Out-of-School Time Project hired consultants to conduct initial and follow-up training with users from each implementing city agency. The consultants also developed a thorough training manual, complete with screen shots. Larger provider organizations sent their managers to the training sessions, who, in turn, trained their line staff. In our survey, approximately 76 percent of providers

[3] Only providers funded by FSS were surveyed.

who had received training rated it as very or extremely useful. We were told that Cityspan ran a helpdesk and an online issue tracker to continuously support users.

Data Linkages and Sharing. It is important to point out that, although the MI systems captured enrollment and attendance data for each participating city agency, these data were not actively linked as of spring 2009, and city agencies had direct access only to their own data. There was a plan to link the data in the second phase of the grant (years 4 and 5). Some of the reluctance to share data can be explained by confidentiality concerns related to participant-level data. We were told that another significant factor was that partnering was quite new to these city agencies, which were used to operating in an OST environment in which turf, funding, and data were protected and collaboration was rare. Some sources pointed out that data integration was not a main driver of these agencies' participation in the Chicago OST project. "The selling point is improved operations—efficiency. That's the sweet spot for everybody. Not the linking of data with other organizations. That is not a selling point."

Some initial presentations of summary data were made to the partners in spring 2009 to spark discussion about ways to use integrated, citywide data that included all the main OST funders to more effectively plan and manage OST programs. In spring 2009, we were told that analysis and sharing of OST data to more effectively plan and manage programs would be a central focus of the project during the second wave of Wallace funding (2009–2012).

The program locator developed in Chicago also represented one example of data linkage. Data from Cityspan were used to populate an online program locator that gave parents and teens the ability to search for OST programs by program characteristic (e.g., type, days and hours, eligibility) and location. The program locator was ready for beta testing in November 2007 and was publicly launched in September 2008 (see After-School Chicago, undated). OST programs not using Cityspan were partially represented in the program locator, thanks to surveys conducted by Chapin Hall at University of Chicago.

Use of MI System Data. We were told that although providers were slightly resistant to implementing Cityspan at first, many grew to appreciate the benefits of the system. Thirty-seven percent of surveyed providers reported that they would not use Cityspan if it were not required. Stakeholders in Chicago identified the following uses of data from the MI systems:

- *Tracking enrollment and attendance.* Program providers reported that Cityspan reduced the administrative burden of program registration and keeping attendance and that it enabled them to report data more easily than before. According to one provider, "We are burdened with the amount of paperwork. If we can alleviate that due to better computer services, we will have more time and maybe we could work together with other providers or develop new programming options." A few providers we interviewed cited the efficiencies gained in setting up new programs in Cityspan and being able to easily print out attendance sheets.
- *Improving communication between funders and providers.* Every provider with whom we spoke suggested that Cityspan's reporting mechanism was superior to the systems that preceded it at FSS or CPS, and 68 percent of providers surveyed agreed that Cityspan improved communication between their program and the funder. A few providers also stressed that attendance reports and program descriptions were easily generated, which was helpful when pursuing RFPs and other programming solicitations.
- *Improving contract management and quality monitoring.* Some sources in Chicago pointed out that keeping a watchful eye on attendance through Cityspan led to more timely and

effective quality-improvement interventions than were possible before Cityspan implementation. For instance, in the case of FSS, some youth services coordinators reported actively using Cityspan to ensure a base level of program quality by monitoring average daily attendance and working to support the provider if a program's average daily attendance dropped below 80 percent. We were told that this represented a significant change in culture and led to greater accountability on the part of providers. As one agency official noted, "When I first started, no one [no providers] lost funding. There were agencies [providers] that hadn't been open for a single day. That is no longer the case."

- *Improving OST program design and management.* CPS reported using MI system data to improve OST program design and management at the school level by providing annual reports to site coordinators at the beginning of the year. The reports included aggregate data on student participation in the school's OST programs so that principals and coordinators could modify programs to target groups with low participation. For example, if 75 percent of after-school participants were girls, a school might change its programming to attract more boys. Park District management staff also reported using regular average daily attendance reports to make programming adjustments. According to one official, "In extreme cases, if you have less than half your target enrollment showing up on average, you can pull the class and do something else with those resources."

Challenges. Most OST providers received funding from multiple sources and had to use multiple MI systems to report to these funders. Besides the requirements of funders, national organizations often have to maintain a separate MI system. Some providers reported that using multiple MI systems resulted in duplication of efforts and drained resources and staff time. In addition, the agencies had different MI systems, even though they were ostensibly under the Cityspan umbrella. While many providers liked Cityspan, those with an institutional MI system tended to use that for program improvement, as it captured the totality of their programming and not just programs funded by FSS or CPS.

Many sources in Chicago cited the high staff turnover and the seasonal nature of youth programming as a hindrance to Cityspan implementation, or at least pointed to the continuing cost of having to train new staff to operate the system. Infrastructure limitations were reported as well, particularly at the Park District (as discussed previously) and among small OST providers with limited budgets and access to necessary computer hardware.

Future Steps. Linking and using data to better plan and improve OST provision in the city was the primary goal of the project's second phase (2009–2012). Respondents described wanting to analyze data to identify geographic areas of the city that were underserved (or overserved) and to compare attendance and demand for services among the funding agencies to drive collaboration, joint planning of services, and adoption of best practices. The project planned to expand the reporting capabilities of Cityspan and increase the number of OST programs captured in the system to facilitate this goal.

We were told that some initial attempts had been made to link CPS-funded OST program participation with test scores and student behavior. Sources in CPS indicated that these analyses were useful in lobbying principals to support OST activities at their schools, because they showed positive associations between student achievement and OST participation. Sources also said that they used these linkages to ask principals to reconsider policies that disallowed students with low grades or behavior problems from attending OST programs, since these

programs might help improve these sorts of outcomes. Sources thought that expanding these analyses could help argue for more OST funding at the city, state, and federal levels.

Developing a Sustainment Strategy

Sustainability Pillar. The OST project worked with Chicago Metropolis 2020, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering civic entrepreneurship in the Chicago area, to develop public advocacy measures that could lead to a permanent government funding stream for city OST programs. Chicago Metropolis 2020 conducted a scan of the United States, looking for successful OST funding models, and also paid a consultant to conduct focus groups to better understand the nature and depth of public support for OST programs. (Two focus groups were held in Chicago, plus two in the Chicago suburbs and one in Peoria, Illinois.) In early 2008, the Chicago OST project and Metropolis 2020 were involved in the creation of ACT Now (After-School for Children and Teens Now), a city-state and public-private initiative that sought greater public support and a dedicated funding stream for after-school programming statewide. ACT Now convened OST leaders on a monthly basis to discuss and plan public outreach and lobbying strategies related to sutaining funding for OST programs. Given the state's fiscal crisis and economic recession at the end of the study, leaders of this effort were not expecting a dedicated state funding stream for OST programs in the short term. However, as one source put it, "A line item in the state budget is not realistic now, given the deep financial straits the state is in. But we want to keep trying, so that when things are better someday, we are first in line."

Enablers and Challenges to Implementation

Skillful Project Management During MI System Development. It is fair to say that Chicago's OST project tackled the information pillar first in its efforts to create a citywide system. In particular, Chicago spent time and money implementing MI systems for its major OST funding organizations. The potential benefits of this strategy have been discussed. It brought together key players from the various partner agencies and provided a topic that everyone agreed was of great value to the partners individually. It also answered key questions concerning greater citywide coordination: Who participates in OST programs? What kinds of programs exist, and which are in highest demand? Where do OST programs exist in the city? Where are they needed most? Put simply, it was something that everyone could agree on, including the individual providers.

Through hard work, skillful project management, and collaboration on the part of the partners, the third-largest city in the nation implemented successful MI systems in its major OST-funding agencies, helped providers administer their programs and report to OST funders, and helped inform city funding by identifying which kinds of OST programming and programming locations would benefit the city. This represented implementation on a large scale, not a limited pilot effort. Furthermore, consumers of OST services (parents and teens) also reportedly benefitted from the program locator.

Successful Implementation Strategies. Sources repeatedly cited Chicago's use of outside consultants in implementing the Cityspan systems when explaining its successful (and fast) implementation. They also recommended that other cities use consultants when attempting

similar endeavors. "That's how you get it done on time and on budget. You need dedicated staff. You can't use a city department because it is too worried about its own programs."

Another successful implementation strategy practiced by Chicago was the use of pilot efforts that preceded full implementation. For Cityspan, the pilot implementation included FSS and Chicago Park District sites only. Chicago used a pilot for its quality pillar, though at the time of our study, respondents were less certain that it could be sustained if scaled up.

According to city leaders, prior to the Chicago Out-of-School Time Project, the provider community was cynical about funding agencies' intentions, fearing a tendency toward regulation rather than support. In light of the successful pilot implementation of Cityspan, respondents felt that providers were more hopeful and less distrusting of the partners. Multiple sources thought that participation on the part of providers in the quality-improvement pilot created a venue in which partners could interact and potentially cooperate with one another. Since venues for provider coordination were few in Chicago, this was a welcome—if unexpected—benefit of the program-improvement pilot. Because of positive experiences with attempts to collaborate, as during the implementation of the MI systems or the program-improvement pilot, according to one source,

> Now, it's possible to talk about improving quality and promoting innovation without getting laughed at, and providers are willing to participate in these efforts. The payoff is becoming clearer to the providers and has a momentum and life of its own that is driven by practical benefits of collaboration.

Coordination from the Middle. Although Mayor Daley voiced his support of the OST project's efforts and was present at certain key junctures in the history of the effort (for example, the public launch of the program locator in September 2008), the mayor was not the key driver of coordination among the agencies that controlled the majority of the OST program dollars in Chicago. Instead, coordination was driven by the agency heads and, sometimes, mid- to upper-level managers. For coordination to occur under these circumstances, it required partner agencies to be convinced that activities were in their best institutional interests. A higher political authority was not forcing them to give up provincial or institutional interests for the greater good of the city. As one source put it, "I would say we are functioning out of our own will. I know the mayor has been briefed and was present when the locator was launched. He is aware of what's happening. And his team is aware. But I think it is driven by agencies and leadership in those groups."

As an example, the agency partners in the OST project met to discuss reporting options from merged Cityspan data in the spring of 2009. Discussions were held not because the mayor demanded a certain level of reporting on OST program participation, but instead because the leaders of the initiative took the opportunity to discuss the recently merged data with the partners. The theme of the meeting, according to one source, was that "these data resources exist, and you may want to use some of them." While it was encouraging that the conversation took place at all, which speaks to the dedication and hard work of the partner agencies, it remained to be seen whether significant coordination in OST program planning and provision would continue without greater involvement and demands from top political leaders in Chicago.

Respected Leadership. Because there was no mayoral force demanding that agencies work with one another, the role of respected leadership in the effort was crucial. Respondents told us that Margaret Daley and CYS/FSS Commissioner Mary Ellon Caron were both well

respected throughout Chicago and its agencies and that their leadership during the planning process and coordination effort was critical to the initiative's success. Funding encouraged cooperation, but respondents saw leadership as key. "The combination of the carrot of the Wallace money, plus the fact that this was an initiative endorsed by Mrs. Daley and Commissioner Caron: These things helped bring people to the table." Of course, leadership cannot do it alone; there also must be a shared concept or accepted value in cooperation. In providing advice to other cities attempting to implement a coordinated system for OST provision, one source said simply, "Who you choose as the leaders, and the personal relationships they bring, are very important."

Demographic Shifts. Staff from Chapin Hall and others with whom we spoke in Chicago cited demographic shifts in the population to the northwest and southwest parts of the city, as well more decentralized public housing options, as presenting challenges to OST providers. Partner agencies, such as the Chicago Park District, understood the need to provide OST services where there was increasing demand. However, these groups faced some very real constraints in shifting services to meet growing demand, as building new parks, schools, and libraries in areas with growing youth populations is a resource-intense exercise.

CHAPTER SIX

Washington, D.C.

Introduction

The Wallace Foundation provided the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (the Trust) with a planning grant in October 2005 and a full implementation grant in April 2006, which provided $8 million over three years to implement its vision for improved system coordination. Shortly after this award, a new mayor was elected and took control of the schools in June 2007. In this new environment, many changes were made in terms of OST provision in the city.

Local Context

In 2005, just prior to The Wallace Foundation's investment, Washington, D.C., was the 27th largest city in the nation, with a population of just over 580,000 (see Table 6.1). Almost 60,000 students attended the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS); however, a large percentage of students living in the city attended charter schools, which were operated by an independent oversight board and not governed by DCPS. The significant number of students enrolled in charter schools was partly in response to poor performance in the public school system. Charter school enrollment increased over the course of the Wallace grant and reached almost 26,000 students in 2008—more than one-third of the city's student population.

Over the past decade, a number of actions have been taken in an attempt to reverse the city's long tradition of poor student performance and high truancy, dropout, and crime rates. While charter schools and the authorization of tuition vouchers to attend private schools provided alternatives to public schooling, there were also direct efforts to change the governance—and the direction—of the public school system. In April 2007, newly elected Mayor Adrian Fenty took control over DCPS and subsequently appointed a chancellor to pursue an aggressive reform agenda, which included a reorganization of schools' OST programs.

OST Sector Prior to The Wallace Foundation Initiative

In the late 1990s, the system of OST in Washington, D.C., was deemed broken. Interviewees familiar with the city at that time described a lack of vision, policy, and coordination. A map of the city agencies and organizations involved at that time would show a very complex system with little funding stability. For example, the DCPS Office of Extended Learning was cut off

Table 6.1
Washington, D.C., Demographic Information, 2005

Characteristic	Value
Population[a]	582,049
Youth population (under 18)[b]	21.6%
Median household income[b]	$47,221
Individual poverty rate[b]	19.0%
Public K–12 enrollment[c]	59,616
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[c]	61.0%
Citywide attendance rate (average)	Not available
Number of schools in need of improvement/total number of schools[d]	89/149

[a] Estimate for 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.
[b] Data for 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005.
[c] Data for 2005–2006 school year; Garofano, Sable, and Hoffman, 2008.
[d] D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education, 2005.

from the rest of DCPS and was not involved with other city OST provision efforts. As some interviewees put it,

> There was also a huge disconnect between the schools and OST programs.
>
> OST was important, but did not add any value to the system.
>
> Historically, the city has not had a vision for OST. There was no curriculum; there was no student information system in place to report reliable student attendance data; it was not a collaborative effort with community organizations.

Interested parties coalesced around the idea of a public-private agency similar to TASC in New York City or LA BEST in Los Angeles, which could stabilize funding and begin to incorporate quality standards. The resulting public-private venture, promoted by major local foundations, was the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation. It linked public and private resources and promoted creativity in and commitment to strategies for investing in youth development. Its goal was to act as an intermediary between the city government, parents, and private providers of OST, matching children to quality OST opportunities.

Founded in 1999, the Trust relied on funding from the city government, foundations and philanthropies, and fees. Much of the city funding came from earmarks in the budget, with the Trust acting as a flow-through to OST providers.

In addition to DCPS, several other city agencies were heavily involved in school-age issues, including the Family Court of the Superior Court of Washington, D.C., the Department of Human Services, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Health, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the DC Public Library. Involved quasigovernmental and nonprofit organizations included the Trust, the D.C. Education Compact, and the Federal City Council. The Education Compact was a group of interested parties, including founda-

tions and businesses, which banded together to help improve the district's schools, in part through more deliberate and focused fundraising. The Federal City Council was a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to improving the city, and it supported increased and more effective OST for many years.

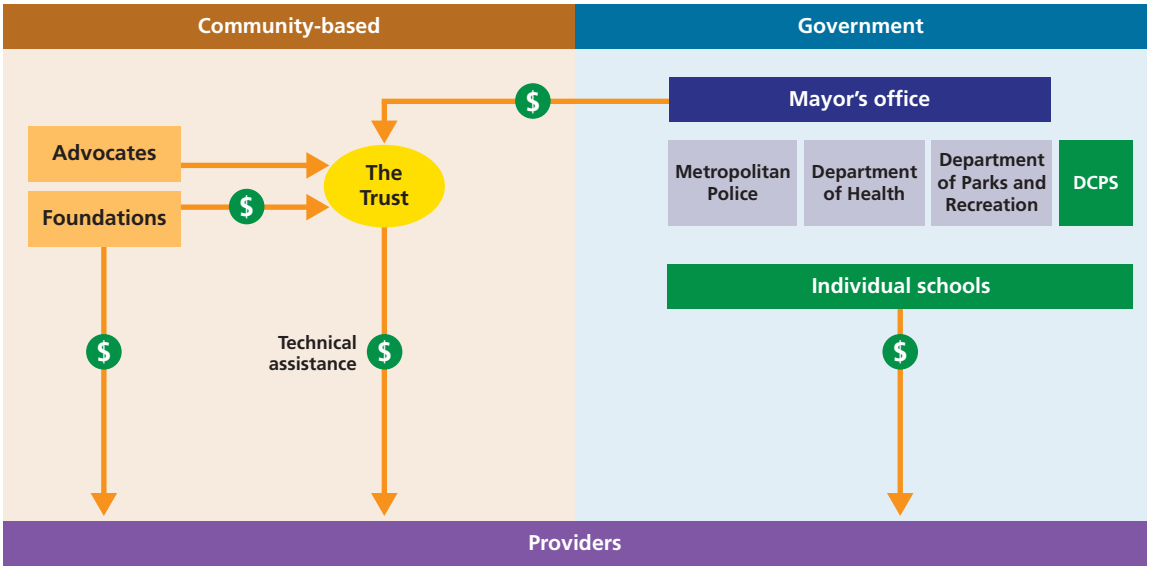
In 2002, while many agencies played a role, the two major agencies involved in OST were DCPS and the Trust, with the Trust acting as an intermediary for community-based providers. That summer, it was clear that the schools would fall short of providing the summer programming needed by the city youth. Representatives from various agencies met under the auspices of the Trust and the Washington Grantmakers (a group of foundations interested in supporting educational improvement) to discuss this issue. The meetings led to the development of an informal collaboration within the city that was dedicated to improving OST quality and access with support from the Trust, the local grant makers, DCPS, the Federal City Council, and other agencies.

In particular, the group wanted to improve the coordination among the Trust, DCPS, and the Department of Parks and Recreation. In addition, the school-centered programs were sometimes run by individual schools, not coordinated centrally; we were told that, in some cases, principals were interested in supplementing the income of teachers and were not strongly supportive of high-quality OST. Many looked to this effort to improve quality across all the programs.

At this point, the functional structure looked similar to that in Figure 6.1, with the Trust playing a major coordinating role among both government and nongovernmental players in the city.

Figure 6.1 shows the role of some of the city agencies, although many more were involved in peripheral ways. The Trust already existed as a public-private venture and was supported by foundations. It provided technical assistance and funneled city funding to providers in a coor-

Figure 6.1
Functional Design of OST in Washington, D.C., Prior to the Wallace Initiative



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dinated fashion. In addition, the public schools provided some after-school activities, primarily through teachers or 21st Century Learning Centers.

History of The Wallace Foundation Initiative

In 2005, The Wallace Foundation, looking for sites in which seed grants could promote significant improvement in OST through citywide planning, heard about these efforts in Washington, D.C.[1] Wallace Foundation staff visited and shortly thereafter offered a preplanning grant of $60,000 to the Trust to develop a more ambitious effort. The Trust convened the informal group, which included then-Mayor Anthony Williams and the DCPS superintendent, to discuss what might be done. One particular goal was to give providers easier access to school buildings, as this had always been difficult to accomplish in the past.

The group immediately chose the middle school years as the focus of its efforts, for several reasons. First, the superintendent provided data to show poor prospects for middle school students in the city, combined with high truancy rates and little OST program choice:

- Fifty-four percent of the middle school student population lived in a female-headed household with no adult male present (the Trust, 2006, p. 4).
- Only 10 percent of middle school students in the city scored at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress in English, and 6 percent did so in math (the Trust, 2006, p. 4).
- Twenty-four of 27 schools serving grades 6–8 failed to meet adequate yearly progress under No Child Left Behind (the Trust, 2006, p. 4).
- In 2004–2005, 720 middle school youth were picked up for truancy, and 2,412 new criminal cases were filed against juveniles in 2003 (the Trust, 2006, p. 4).
- About 70 percent of schools serving middle grade students had only a single OST program or none at all (Root Cause, 2007, p. 4).

Second, the elementary grades had been relatively well served, especially the lower primary grades, as strong, vocal constituency groups had ensured that the limited resources flowed to this group. Middle schools, meanwhile, were drastically underserved. One potential source of federal funding to support for OST, Temporary Aid to Needy Families, ended at age 12. In addition, it was thought that this was the most difficult population to serve because the students exercised choice and often chose not to participate in OST programs. With middle school students choosing not to attend and little in the way of subsidy, providers opted for the elementary school market, where there was strong demand and funding. As one interviewee noted, "The market was not driven towards the middle schools."

In October 2005, The Wallace Foundation awarded the Trust a one-year planning grant of $1 million to implement a planning and data-gathering process that could show how to create a coordinated OST system in the city. During this planning grant period, the Trust employed Market Street Research to conduct a series of interviews, focus groups, and surveys

[1] Information in this section is derived from the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation's business plan (The Trust, 2006).

of children and parents to identify gaps in services. Key findings from this research included (Market Street Research, 2006):

- Parents clearly valued organized OST activities for middle school students, believing that, at a minimum, such activities helped reduce delinquency, developed scholastic skills, and helped children escape poverty and attain a more successful future.
- On average, children in this age group spent two days a week in activities, but there were ways to increase satisfaction.
- Barriers to participation included concerns about safety, transportation (specifically, getting children to and from the activities safely), family responsibilities, lack of awareness of programs, and attitudes.
- Parents and children indicated a high level of interest in attending high-quality programs that were available up to four days a week.
- CBOs noted interest in more training and opportunities to partner with other CBOs to improve quality and access.

During this planning period, the mayor actively supported the initiative by attending meetings and using his bully pulpit to focus the city on youth issues, as did the superintendent. At that time, Mayor Williams had not yet announced that he would not run for reelection.

The Plan

The plan produced was branded Project My Time (PMT) to encourage youth to see it as their time to use productively. The project was two pronged, consisting of (1) a demonstration in selected middle schools, with eventual scale-up of service provision across all middle schools, and (2) the development of integrated systemic supports, including an MI system.

Demonstration. The plan was to be implemented first in five middle schools with a demonstration of programming and run from September 2006 to June 2008. In July 2008 through August 2012, it would be scaled up to other middle schools. The ultimate goal was to enroll 50 percent of all students and maintain a 75-percent participation rate at three days a week.

First, a specific model for provision would be developed based on improved quality standards. Programs would be offered through two to three selected schools in the fall and winter/spring. Programs would establish a diverse menu of activities, recruiting children at schools, and would try to use community assets (mainly from nonprofits) to their advantage. After collecting data on the success of this effort, the model would be improved and expanded to two more schools. Capacity would be built to enable expansion across the system.

System Support. The supporting infrastructure for the citywide system would be three-pronged: an MI system to track enrollment and attendance, a system for using and improving standards through training, and a communication strategy. The creation of a citywide data-gathering and evaluation system would track frequency of attendance and total enrollment. New standards would be developed and targeted toward the middle school years. Providers would be assessed against quality standards, and those that were deficient would be offered training and development. PMT would build on the current set of provider standards developed by the Trust and ensure that all providers used these standards. Training opportunities would be created and offered, and consultation would be provided. PMT would especially focus on the provider leaders and offer the leadership training needed to build expansion. The partners would initiate a major communication strategy to ensure that parents and students

knew what was available. There would also be a local component at each middle school, a broader component to generate parental and voter support for OST, and a stakeholder-specific component.

Desired Outcomes. By June 2008, the effort would assess specific youth outcomes, such as improvement in self-efficacy, engagement and motivation in school, attendance rates, achievement, on-time grade advancement, and graduation rates. It would also look for reductions in truancy rates, behavior problems, and risky behaviors.

Sustainment. The effort would be sustained in the long term through absorption by the city budget. Public participation and support would be key to making this happen, and this effort would be supported by the communication strategy.

Award. Based on the plan's promise and strong mayoral support, in 2006, The Wallace Foundation awarded the Trust an $8 million, three-year implementation grant. The actual implementation began in September 2006 and was publicly launched January 2007. It was slated to end in September 2009.

Efforts Under the Implementation Grant

This section details the city's OST efforts since the inception of the Wallace implementation grant, through May 2009. We first discuss the functional design of the system after the Wallace grant and the mechanisms used to coordinate activities. Then, we describe activities and efforts to increase access, improve quality, use data to drive decisionmaking, and develop a sustainment strategy. Although each activity is discussed in only one section, some activities supported multiple goals.

Functional Design

The public launch roughly coincided with the inauguration of a new mayor, Adrian Fenty. Mayor Fenty ran on a platform of support for youth development, in part because of alarmingly high crime rates involving youth. Inaugurated in January 2007, he began to consolidate control of a vast and reportedly dysfunctional bureaucracy. He moved to increase mayoral power and used it to reduce the number of commissions and agencies operating in Washington, D.C. He also began to impose a strict set of accountability processes to ensure effective and efficient city services. As one observer put this, "This mayor now has authority over city functions that no previous mayor has had. . . . His mode of operation has been to get an issue area within the government, get their bearings, and then seek partners who are in concert with that direction." Others talked of a "forced alignment with the direction the mayor wants to go."

One such step was the mayoral takeover of DCPS on June 12, 2007. The superintendent left and the mayor appointed a chancellor of the schools, who reports to the mayor. The city council oversees budgets and planning for the schools. Several council members have been strong supporters of OST, in part because of their backgrounds in youth services. This administration changed climate for OST and PMT tremendously. Interviewees point to Mayor Fenty as being strongly behind better OST programming and pushing agencies to work collectively to improve it.

With these mayoral mandates and the concurrent push toward better coordination, the functional design of the city's OST initiative shifted. As of spring 2009, the Trust sat at

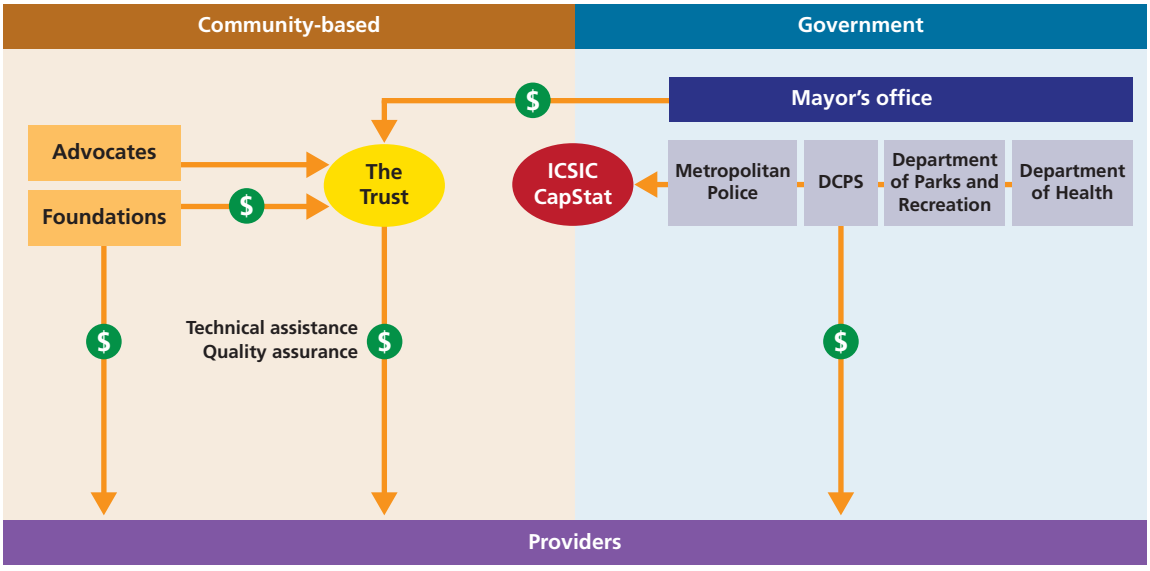
the table with multiple city officials and agencies but was not the major coordinating lead. Instead, the Interagency Collaboration and Services Integration Commission (ICSIC) and CapStat groups in the mayor's office (discussed later) appeared to lead coordination among the government and quasigovernmental entities (see Figure 6.2). As the initiative further unfolded, the public schools began a major campaign to offer OST to students in every school. Thus, the school system became the major OST funder within the government.

Coordination

The ICSIC was established as part of the mayoral control legislation to "improve services for vulnerable children by promoting social and emotional skills among children and youth through the oversight of a comprehensive integrated delivery system" (SCCYF, undated). It was composed of 21 members and included representatives from all major departments that offered youth services, including the Family Court, DCPS, the Department of Human Services, the Child and Family Services Agency, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the DC Public Library. The mayor appointed other members, including the president of the Trust. The ICSIC typically met at least once per month to address the city's six youth-related goals, namely that children and youth are ready for school; that they succeed in school; that they are healthy and practice healthy behaviors; that they engage in meaningful activities; that they live in healthy, stable, and supportive families; and that they transition to full adulthood (see SCCYF, undated).

In addition, the mayor established the CapStat review process to address pressing cross-agency issues. This process—configured according to the issue area of interest—occurred at least weekly. An informal steering committee for OST was also formed in November 2007 by DCPS and met on a weekly basis. Members of this group included several CBOs, the Trust, the Department of Parks and Recreation, DCPS, and grant makers. This group and those run by the mayor's office were created to ensure coordination among the various OST efforts.

Figure 6.2
Functional Design of OST in Washington, D.C., After the Wallace Initiative



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Increasing Access and Participation

PMT Demonstrations. In January 2007, the Trust launched the first three demonstrations of PMT. The model placed an individual site director, who was responsible for developing and maintaining the program, in each PMT school. The process for improvement was also determined: Gauge student interest, coordinate provision to the right set of activities, allow students to choose programs of interest, and provide a safe environment and supportive relationships to ensure that goals are met. In September 2007, two additional sites were launched (five sites total). The Trust developed a set of marketing materials, including brochures that described available opportunities. Based on feedback from 2006, an improved site-level communication plan was established to create more awareness of programs. The site director at each site implemented the communication plan, which included participation by teachers and principals. Site directors were responsible for kick-off events and assemblies, distribution of promotional information, mailings, teacher engagement, and cross-agency marketing.

In September 2008, eight middle schools were operating the PMT model. First, a summer program was piloted, with PMT sites operating a daily summer program for six hours per day over a six-week period. In addition, in 2008, each site launched its Local Academic Working Group to help coordinate offerings between the school staff and the providers.

In 2008, the chancellor introduced an extended-learning model for failing DCPS schools (which included all middle schools). From the end of the last class until 4:30 p.m., there was a "power hour," during which students received academic preparation. From 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., PMT offered OST activities that suited students' interests.

As mentioned previously, the Trust's PMT initiative began to feel the impact of the ongoing DCPS reforms by fall 2008. Three of the five middle schools implementing PMT faced restructuring by DCPS. The Trust's second-year summary report to The Wallace Foundation noted that school administrators in these schools became gradually disengaged from the PMT initiative and turned their focus to the DCPS restructuring. In addition, several key contacts left DCPS, which made it a challenge to maintain channels of communication and meant that the Trust had to rebuild that relationship (the Trust, 2008).

OST in All Public Schools. Concerned about the inconsistency of opportunities for students to participate in OST programs, in 2008–2009, DCPS adopted a PMT-like model for all schools. The majority of schools with OST programming received a full-time after-school coordinator to oversee OST programming and to link, to the extent possible, in-school activities with OST goals. Officials at DCPS thought that the full-time coordinator model adopted by the Trust for PMT was a "good idea." DCPS envisioned that the full-time coordinator would improve coordination between the school and OST providers, as well as improve student recruitment and participation rates. The coordinators were to work closely with principals and instructional staff but ultimately report to DCPS. Some schools were permitted to keep their arrangement with teachers coordinating OST activities.

Locator Systems. As planned, a new website was launched under PMT that allowed parents and others to find OST programs based on ward or zip code. The site provided basic information about the program and linked to the website of the provider organization. The locator system covered OST programs in the PMT sites and those funded by the Trust.

Improving Quality

New Leaders, New Communities. Planners at the Trust identified a key challenge—to get providers to think about how to provide quality programs on a larger scale. This required a

change in how the leaders of those organizations thought about and managed their operations. Under PMT, the Trust set up an institute called New Leaders, New Communities to train and coach leaders from nonprofits. It cost about $65,000 to bring each CBO leader through the institute, but this covered the development of their strategic plans through actual implementation. The Trust targeted middle school providers, of whom there were about 60, for this training and coaching. It provided the training to 31 people in 2007 and 2008.

Quality Standards. The Trust developed and published quality standards for OST provision. PMT site directors and staff began conducting regular quality assessments in January 2008, and the scores became a key criterion for future funding in September 2008.

Vetting of Providers. The Trust worked with DCPS to vet providers who would operate in DCPS public schools in the 2008–2009 school year. Most providers that applied through the DCPS assessment process ended up being approved to operate in the schools for that school year. The assessment process consisted of ensuring that providers met basic standards, such as acquiring insurance, conducting background checks on all employees, and showing proof that staff had undergone certain medical examinations.

Each full-time coordinator received a list that included the names and programs of CBOs already operating at the school and information about other CBOs that applied to be vetted for that school. The coordinator was asked to reach out to the new CBOs in an effort to bring more programming opportunities to the school. A city official mentioned the desire to implement a similar vetting process with Department of Parks and Recreation providers and to align this vetting process with the Trust's efforts to assess provider quality.

Training for Providers. Under this new system, the Trust was asked to provide training to the full-time coordinators and technical assistance, when needed, and to help monitor program quality using the standards it developed (the Trust, 2008). As of spring 2009, there were plans for future expansion. The Trust provided DCPS full-time coordinators with initial training in August 2008 on youth development, and subsequent training focused on working with CBOs and after-school program providers. The Trust offered cluster coaches for the new full-time coordinators; however, oversight in the first year was more limited than planned. The Trust also provided training to PMT coordinators, and Trust staff in the use of the National Institute on Out-of-School Time–developed Afterschool Program Practices Tool, but as of spring 2009, training had not been expanded to include the DCPS full-time coordinators.

Using Data to Improve Decisionmaking: Management Information System Development and Implementation

Prior to the Wallace grant, in 2002, the Trust began using the Cityspan-developed Webstars system for contract management and monitoring. It used this information to track both program demand and compliance. The Trust reviewed attendance data with providers paying close attention to low enrollment and low attendance, which were used to make recommendations to programs and adjustments to funding payments.

Webstars brought together financial and administrative information to assist with budgets, billing, invoicing, contract management, and scope of work and to manage deliverables. The MI system also collected data on participants, such as contact and demographic information, and programs, such as activity descriptions.

The 2006 plan submitted to The Wallace Foundation outlined a more comprehensive approach to using Webstars. The plan suggested steps toward linking this system with other city databases, such as those run by the Department of Health and DCPS. This more sophis-

ticated system was to be implemented in the PMT sites first and then scaled up over time. It was intended to allow sites to focus on improving youth socioemotional (self-efficacy, engagement, motivation), behavioral (attendance, truancy, discipline, risky behavior), and academic (test scores, grade progression, graduation) outcomes. Webstars would interface with other city databases and become a tool that could be used to target high-need youth for participation and track the impact of OST programming on youth outcomes.

However, as of spring 2009 this larger vision had not yet been realized. Because the Trust had an interest in using an MI system beyond contract management and attendance tracking for individual programs, it issued an RFP for a new MI system (based on system specifications developed by a technical consultant), which was awarded in spring 2009. The Trust's RFP mandated functions that would help track individual students across funded programs, use scan-card technology to track attendance, measure program outcomes through participant assessments and surveys, and allow programs to establish their own logic models to support program improvement. It presented as an option that the MI system would allow providers to build custom participant-level data fields accessible only to that provider. The Trust expected that the new data system could eventually be linked with data being collected by DCPS site coordinators.

The mayor made demands for OST participation data. Using Webstars data provided by the Trust, the mayor's budget officers analyzed trends in provision. They found that some of the providers were reporting 100-percent attendance. This outcome and the data entry by those providers was suspect. The Trust later followed up with these providers to reinforce the importance of data quality. Finally, the budgeters plotted the enrollment data on a map of the city to show where the programs were and where significant programming was missing. Similar data on Department of Parks and Recreation programming were also assembled. The discussion then revolved around how to ensure that the best programs were funded, that less effective ones were dropped, and that programs were placed where needed.

Next, we address issues of data accuracy, training and technical assistance, data linkages and sharing, use of MI system data, challenges faced, and future steps.

Data Accuracy. The Trust generally felt that data in the system were accurate. However, sources reported facing some challenges with respect to data accuracy in Webstars. The first had to do with student registration at the PMT sites. Because student registration forms tended to be inaccurate and, at times, out of date, the Trust had difficulty generating accurate reports at the site level. To help combat these problems at the PMT sites, the Trust began using computer-generated forms for enrollment, and part-time site assistants were hired to assist with the registration and data entry.

As described earlier, to verify the accuracy of participation data, the mayor's budget office and the Trust examined attendance reports. Sites with consistent 100-percent attendance raised red flags about the validity of their data. Staff from the Trust also reported plans to check for data accuracy during site visits to programs by checking their counts of participants against recorded attendance data.

Training and Technical Assistance. PMT coordinators and OST staff received their MI system training from the Trust. They employed a "train-the-trainer" model that included periodic on-site support as well. This training focused primarily on the use of the system and was offered periodically. However, only 48 percent of providers surveyed rated the training as very or extremely useful.

Webstars also included a helpdesk feature, and Cityspan maintained a toll-free call-in number for technical assistance. In addition, Cityspan offered web-based training, and users received electronic invitations to participate.

Data Linkages and Sharing. In 2006, various city agencies that addressed youth issues signed an MOU to facilitate data sharing through the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, and there were plans to link education data maintained by the State Education Office with this database (the Trust, 2006). By 2007, the State Education Office (now the Office of the State Superintendent of Education), DCPS, the Trust, and other city agencies had entered into an agreement with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer to take part in the data sharing and access arrangement. If fully implemented, this newly forged connection had the potential to link OST participation data, school district data, and health and human services data, thus creating a comprehensive, powerful database of information on youth outcomes. As of spring 2009, the database was in the conception and planning stages.

While the Webstars system and DCPS's DC STARS (Student Tracking and Reporting System) were not linked, officials at the Trust indicated that the new MI system will have the ability to interface with the DCPS database. As of spring 2009, the Trust did gain access to DCPS records of students participating in PMT whose parents had signed release forms. DCPS provided the Trust with student demographic, attendance, and achievement (test scores and course grades) information. The Trust hired a consultant to analyze these data and provide reports.

Use of MI System Data. According to sources at the Trust and others in the city, Webstars was used for the following purposes:

- *Payment and contract management.* Webstars providers were required to submit attendance reports on a quarterly basis. These reports were reviewed by the Trust with each provider, focusing on enrollment and average daily attendance, and could be used to make payment adjustments.
- *Early alert for potential problems.* The Trust noted that PMT site directors were responsible for working with providers that had difficulty meeting attendance goals and devising an action plan to address those shortcomings, including referring providers to training provided by the Trust. In cases in which the problem persisted, contracts were amended for not meeting targets, and in one case, the contract was terminated.
- *Citywide planning.* The mayor's office used Webstars data to examine aggregate OST participation and to discuss options for improving access and quality. The data were used to examine attendance over the course of the year to determine peak attendance periods, participation rates by provider, and participation rates by number of sessions as a proxy for program quality. In addition, data were used to identify geographic areas where there was unmet demand.

Challenges. For a while, the Trust found Webstars, which concentrated on contract management and attendance, to be a suitable and useful tool. However, as the Trust's goals for the system changed, it found it needed to adopt a new system that would meet those goals. The Trust and city government officials saw many benefits to data collection. In fact, the mayor's demands to see data upon which he could base his decisions helped fuel interest in and efforts toward better-functioning data-collection systems.

Staff turnover was an issue faced by many providers. An official at the Trust cited this as a problem with some of the providers in the use of Webstars. In addition, many providers in Washington, D.C., reported using multiple MI systems, which strained staff resources and created frustration.

Future Steps. As of spring 2009, the city was planning to implement a OneCard system that students could use to scan in and out of OST programs, ride public transportation, and check out library books. Fully implemented, the OneCard system would allow the city to track the use of different types of city services and would improve the accuracy of data collection and entry.

An ambitious $5.7 million federally funded initiative to build a database integrating in-school and OST information on students in both public and charter schools had begun. The Statewide Longitudinal Educational Database was to become the central repository for longitudinal information on Washington, D.C., public school students beginning in pre-K up to college and even later. The first step was to create a "universal student ID" to facilitate this integration. As of early spring 2009, unique identifiers and certification for eligibility for free meals were established for all students enrolled in traditional public and charter schools. The Statewide Longitudinal Educational Database included demographic information, individual education plan status, economically disadvantaged status, and which school the student attended. The project was in the process of adding student outcome information, such as test scores and grades. Leaders believed that OST data might also be uploaded to the system, although the exact relationship between the two types of data had not yet been determined (the Trust, 2008).

Developing a Sustainment Strategy

As of spring 2009, little work had been done to develop a sustainment strategy. However, the on-site coordinator model that was demonstrated in the PMT sites was adopted by DCPS in 2008–2009 and signaled a significant commitment of resources from DCPS.

Enablers and Challenges to Implementation

Leadership Changes. Since the implementation of the Wallace grant, a number of key leadership positions changed—the mayor, the superintendent, the president of the Trust. These changes altered the environment and priorities for OST in Washington, D.C. While these changes made implementing the plan envisioned for the grant difficult, commitment to expanding OST opportunities for students remained high among the new leadership. In fact, many significant improvements in the OST system resulted, including the expansion of OST opportunities to students in all DCPS schools, a demand for data to drive the system, and the establishment of a vetting process for OST providers in DCPS schools.

Mayoral Role. There is no question that Mayor Fenty was an avid supporter of quality youth services. It was part of his campaign and continued to be one of his main areas of focus as of spring 2009. The mayor frequently made public statements in support of improving access and quality of youth programming, and, through funding commitments and actions, he translated his words into actions. The interagency collaboration mechanisms, ICSIC and CapStat, brought together various government and nongovernmental agencies to improve coordination, set expectations and goals, and demonstrate progress toward achieving those goals. This pro-

cess presented the major players in the OST sector with both opportunities and challenges to working together.

ICSIC, CapStat, and Broader Coordination. The multiagency process, initiated by the mayor, proved to be a powerful vehicle to bring city agencies together to move forward on OST (among other issues). The meetings, by all accounts, were well organized and resulted in specific benchmarks and action items. This process enabled significant progress in a short time among the city agencies. At the same time, these meetings did not involve broader community assets, and the collaborative structure that existed prior to the Fenty administration somewhat lost its momentum. No respondents could remember meeting, as they had in the past, with a broader group of constituencies. Many felt that these city coordinating mechanisms could not take the place of the intermediary role that the Trust played. As one respondent explained, "It is important to have that liaison role. If the Trust were to go away, and DCPS was the OST office in the city, it would be difficult to get foundations and other players, both city and community, to come to the table."

Charter Schools. One overlooked part of the citywide system appeared to be the charter schools. The charters were governed by the State Education Office and were not a part of DCPS. As a result, when DCPS moved to extend learning and other agencies provided greater access, the charters were not involved. While charter students can access OST programming in the schools, they do not receive the materials and communications that encourage them to do so. As the OST effort was a growing component of the city educational system, the lack of consideration of charters in decisionmaking concerning citywide OST provision remained problematic.

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