TO: Illinois State Board of Education
FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
 Christopher Koch, Director

Agenda Topic: The Illinois After-School Initiative Task Force

Materials: None

Staff Contact(s): Gail Lieberman, Carol McCue, Paul Kren

Purpose of Agenda Item

The purpose of the agenda item is to review the status of the recommendations from the Illinois After-School Initiative, and approve them in concept for inclusion in the final document in October 2002. That document will be going to the General Assembly and Governor.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

Approval of the recommendations of the Illinois After-School Initiative task force, in concept, for inclusion in the final document in October 2002.

Background Information

Background on The Illinois After-School Initiative

The Illinois After-School Initiative was created through House Resolution 63 and Senate Resolution 70 in 2001. The identical resolutions say in relevant part: "The activities of the Illinois After-School Initiative shall include (1) an assessment of the state of after-school services...including identification of the number of children and youth served statewide in after-school programs, identification of the number and location of children and youth who are in need of after school programs, and identification of the various funding streams currently supporting after school programs, and (ii) the development of a plan for coordinating after school services and for achieving a goal of providing after school services for every school age child in this State..." The term “after-school” is defined as all out-of-school time such as before-school and summer.
The Initiative was launched in December 2001, with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and ISBE as the required co-chairs. Task force members (list available upon request) included a broad range of stakeholders representing the various disciplines outlined in the resolutions. Mary Jayne Broncato represented the State Superintendent on the Initiative, followed by Gail Lieberman as of March 1st. An interim report was issued by the co-chairs to the General Assembly in May 2002.

The interim report reflected work of the group as of that date, with particular focus on research/data collection, best practices and policy. The Center for Prevention Research and Development at the University of Illinois was contracted by DHS to provide research (working draft of August 5th available upon request). The Best Practices Working Group is identifying core program elements for after-school programs, based on national research. Parents and youth have been involved in several focus groups around the state. The Policy Work Group continues to meet to discuss capacity building, funding, collaboration, transportation, licensing and related issues.

The Initiative was originally to have submitted its final report in May. However, as the appointments were made later than originally conceived and the first meeting was in December, the General Assembly and Governor were informed that there would be an interim report in May and a final report later. The final deliverable of the Initiative will be a report by the end of October to the General Assembly from DHS and ISBE.

Background on After-School Services Relating to the Initiative

Communities across the state have been working – some for years – on finding solutions to the problem of children and youth languishing without constructive activities during the hours they are not in school.

By 2001, DHS's support of the TeenREACH program, created in 1998 to provide out-of-school-time programs for youth in low-income communities, totaled over $19 million. More than $240 million additional funds administered by several bureaus within IDHS supported other programming for school-aged children and youth. Additional state agencies also provided funding for out-of-school-time services.

The Illinois State Board of Education, through the Summer Bridges remedial reading program, had committed $26 million in state funding to out-of-school-time programming. ISBE’s Child Nutrition Program reimburses schools and child care centers for providing healthy snacks or suppers to the low-income children participating in out-of-school-time programs. In the last fiscal year, ISBE reimbursed the 515 participating schools and 550 child care centers $43 million. An additional $23 million in federal education funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers supported out-of-school-time programs in Illinois. Many municipal governments across the state also provided funding for services for school-aged youth.

Despite these initiatives and the significant public financial investment in a variety of programs, there was no consistent accounting of the number of children in need of out-
of-school-time services, no system to coordinate out-of-school-time services at the state level and no assurances that out-of-school-time programs were utilizing practices proven by research to yield the best results for youth. The Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force would serve as the foundation for this system by providing a forum to gain information from community efforts to improve programming, to learn from the experiences of representatives from youth services and related fields and to understand the needs of Illinois school-aged youth. The resolutions required the Task Force to assess the current state of out-of-school-time services in Illinois – including identifying the number of children and youth who are participating in programs, those who need but are not attending programs and the various public funding streams for out-of-school-time programs – and to develop a plan for coordinating these services so that out-of-school-time programs can eventually be made available to all interested school-aged children.

In December 2001, the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Illinois State Board of Education, the state entities with the largest financial commitment to out-of-school-time programming, convened the Task Force. Then-Superintendent Glenn “Max” McGee of the Illinois State Board of Education,* and Secretary Linda Renee Baker, of the Illinois DHS, co-chaired the Task Force and named over 60 representatives from different disciplines with a connection to out-of-school-time programming to the body. Task Force members or their designees participated in three work groups – Research and Data Collection, Policy and Best Practices – that met each month. A member of the task force co-chaired each work group with the project coordinator. The full task force met five times between December and August 2002. The Illinois Center for Violence Prevention (ICVP) provided staff support to the task force, coordinating the overall efforts of the project and working with the leadership of the task force to provide strategic direction. The Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD) conducted three research studies for the project.

To assess the need for out-of-school-time programs in Illinois, CPRD, with advice from the Research and Data Collection Work Group, analyzed data from the U.S. Census, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Youth Survey, surveyed out-of-school-time program providers and conducted in-depth site visits of 20 programs. ICVP staff interviewed 11 policy and decision makers for a key informant study and conducted nine informal discussions with parents and school-aged youth in five communities across the state.

The Best Practices Work Group, after reviewing the standards for quality programs across the county and drawing from the experiences of task force members, selected 13 core elements that are essential for successful programs. The Policy Work Group created a survey of state administered programs to understand the dynamics of the public funding supporting out-of-school-time programs and the policies governing those programs. ICVP staff drafted a mission statement and set of guiding principles that

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* After the inauguration of the Task Force, Mr. McGee left his post at the State Board of Education and Mr. Respicio Vazquez served as Acting State Superintendent until August 2002, when a permanent Superintendent, Dr. Robert Schilller, was appointed to head the Illinois State Board of Education.
reflected the conclusions of all three of the work groups. The mission and principles were presented to the full task force and approved by the members present at the June meeting.

*Report Recommendations*

Attachment #1 delineates the preliminary recommendations of the Initiative for the final report. The Task Force members will have one final opportunity for review prior to finalizing the document.

*Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications*

Policy issues relate to the role of the State Board of Education in out-of-school time. While we do and should support complementary activities such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, we also remain cognizant of the fact that Illinois is not fully funding the General School Aid formula.

There would need to be another resolution, or an executive order, to have the task force continue forward as currently composed or in a different manner.

The final report of the Initiative Task Force should be widely disseminated for discussion purposes.

*Pros and Cons of Various Actions*

This is a topic of high interest to parents statewide. Our long-term role has yet to be decided. It is recommended that ISBE continue with the planning and dialogue with the after-school community.

*Superintendent’s Recommendation*

Endorse the recommendations of the Illinois After-School Initiative task force, for inclusion in the final report.

*Next Steps*

The full and final report is being drafted and will be available at the beginning of October. The final report will be forwarded to the Board, acted upon at the October meeting, and disseminated the final report by the end of the month from both parties to the Initiative.
The recommendations of the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force lay the foundation for implementing a strategic plan to improve the delivery of out-of-school-time services, increase the public and private resources supporting these services so all interested children and youth have the opportunity to participate and enhance the quality of programs so participants reach their full potential. Work would be necessary after the conclusion of the Initiative, pursuant to the resolution, to continue with the efforts underway.

Each of the areas below is a recommendation for inclusion in the final report. A symbol such as ► indicates a recommendation.

► Mission, Goal, and Guiding Principles of the Initiative

One of the first steps taken by the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force was to define a mission that would support the mandate of the resolutions creating the task force and provide a clear sense of purpose for this and all subsequent efforts to enhance after-school programming in Illinois. Members of the task force, representing a variety of disciplines within several fields including education, child and youth development, research, social services and volunteerism, agreed that this mission provides the best direction to meet the needs of Illinois youth. The mission is based on the premise that out-of-school-time programs should be made available, rather than required, to all interested school-aged children and youth. The mission is supported by a goal that describes the fundamental outcomes expected of out-of-school-time programs.

►► Mission Statement: All children and youth have the opportunity to access quality, affordable, out-of-school-time programs.

►► Goal: The ultimate goal of the Illinois After-school Initiative Task Force is to develop a plan to provide high-quality out-of-school-time programs to all interested children and youth in Illinois. Illinois children and youth will have access to a network of out-of-school-time programs that provide the opportunity:
- to participate in rewarding activities;
- to improve their academic performance;
- to develop positive relationships with peer and adults; and
- to gain self-confidence in a positive and safe environment.

The task force then developed, based on the most recent research and information available on best practices and standards for out-of-school-time programming, twelve principles to guide the decision-making of policy makers and program directors. These principles affirm the steps that must be taken to develop, implement and sustain high-quality out-of-school-time programs.
National research and studies from other states have found that out-of-school-time programs with positive outcomes share common components. The Best Practices Work Group explored research and national resources, such as the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, Forum for Youth Investment, the National School-Age Care Alliance and the National Institute for Out-of-School-Time, and drew upon participants’ own program knowledge to select 13 core elements that are essential in designing and implementing quality programs.

During site visits of 20 Illinois out-of-school-time programs, conducted as part of the task force’s research, the Center for Prevention Research and Development found that program administrators and staff supported the idea of program standards and expectations. However, there was serious concern regarding a program’s ability to meet predetermined standards, given the huge disparities between program size and resources. Some program staff also questioned how it would be possible to use one “measure” for all programs regardless of focus, level of comprehensiveness and size. For smaller, more isolated programs, finding the time, energy and resources to strategically plan around program goals and address program deficits was a much greater challenge.

Recognizing that programs are in various stages of development and do not always have the full funding and programmatic support they need, the Task Force, rather than recommending that the programs be required to implement each of the core elements, offers these elements as benchmarks for programs to strive to meet. The Task Force does encourage the state, through the RFP process, to promote the use of these core elements. Several of the policy recommendations that follow the descriptions of the elements focus on providing programs with the technical assistance and funding needed to implement the core elements in the future. Assisting programs in utilizing best practices in their work with children and youth will be a focus of the future efforts of the Task Force.

►►Guiding Principles:

*Principle on meeting the different needs of children*

Illinois out-of-school programs are tailored to the developmental stage, special needs and physical and cognitive abilities of participants.

Illinois out-of-school programs offer a range of activities to capitalize on the varied interests of children and youth and take creative, multi-disciplinary approaches to develop participants' potential and skills.

Illinois out-of-school programs offer activities that are based on sound practices to reach the program’s stated goals.

Illinois out-of-school programs have an established management system in place addressing personnel management -- including the use of volunteers -- planning,
professional development, accounting and evaluation to deliver effective programming from year to year.

Illinois out-of-school programs are staffed with high quality, well-trained personnel that receive continuous professional development and evaluation.

**Principle on diversity**
Illinois out-of-school programs are developed with respect and appreciation for the diverse backgrounds, family structures, cultures, communities and languages of the children and families served by the program.

**Principles on outcome and evaluation**
Illinois out-of-school programs use policies, programs and principles that have been shown by research to be effective.

Illinois out-of-school programs are held accountable to parents, youth, funders, and related stakeholders through periodic process and outcome evaluations.

Illinois out-of-school programs are data-driven with specific goals, objectives and milestones that regularly assess progress and provide feedback for program improvement.

**Principle on parent involvement**
Illinois out-of-school programs consider parents and caregivers as partners. Programs work with parents and caregivers across all levels of program development, design, implementation and evaluation.

**Principle on the role of the community**
The state of Illinois actively encourages public institutions, schools, private agencies, business, faith-based and other community-based organizations and civic leaders to work collaboratively to plan sustainable out-of-school programs that meet the needs of local children.

**Principle on the role of the state**
State government assures that needs assessments are conducted, priorities are set, training and technical assistance are promoted, best practices are supported and outcomes are evaluated for publicly funded out-of-school-time programs.

► **Core Elements of the Program and Services**
The principles are supported by 13 core elements -- 8 organizational elements and 5 programmatic elements -- that the task force agreed would comprise the essential ingredients of effective programs. These best practices provide direction to programs in working effectively with youth. The core elements are described below.

The elements of best practices are followed by a series of strategic questions and several recommendations for state-level action. In its initial work, the task force
uncovered many important issues that must be addressed before the goal of providing quality out-of-school-time services to all interested youth can be met. It will take time and the involvement of a wider group of individuals and organizations to resolve these issues. The task force has started this conversation by posing the most critical questions. A careful examination of these questions will lead to policies that will make the state’s goal for out-of-school-time programs a reality. The task force also has made specific policy recommendations and highlighted the action steps that must be taken first.

**Organizational Elements**

►► **Ongoing Staff Training and Development**

Staff receives training that supports their ability to carry out program activities and elements to established standards. This includes working knowledge of child development, positive youth development and cultural issues, training on including children and youth with special needs and training for specific program activities, such as recreation, academic enrichment and arts.

►► **Safe and Adequate Facilities**

The facility is safe, meets all relevant municipal codes and provides adequate space to carry out program activities. There is an adequate staff-to-participant ratio to ensure safety. Staff has the latest emergency contact information for participants and knows which participants are in attendance. Children feel confident that they are protected from harm when they are at the program site or participating in activities. When necessary, staff takes measures to ensure participants’ safe passage to and from the program.

►► **Consistent and Defined Program Management**

All programs, regardless of their size, have in place a strong program plan and organizational structure, effective management and plan for sustaining the program. Staff has the opportunity to evaluate their own practice, provide feedback to management and plan their activities. There are written job descriptions and documentation of program activities.

►► **Sustainability**

The four key elements of sustaining an after-school program are adequate funding, evaluation, successful outcomes and leadership at the state and local levels committed to building resources for the program.

►► **Transportation**

Plans for providing transportation to and from program activities reflect the needs of the local community, the location of the program, the age of program participants, community safety concerns and the hours of the program’s operation.

►► **Community Collaboration**

Schools, community and faith-based organizations, government agencies, civic organizations, business, foundations and participants and their families work
collaboratively to connect after-school programs with community resources. The organizational culture of the program supports this collaboration. All actors actively promote the program to build local support.

►► Program Monitoring/Evaluation
Program evaluation, quality assurance and continuous improvement strategies are in place to ensure that programs goals and targeted outcomes are met. Programs have data collection strategies and information systems in place to facilitate the evaluation.

►► Parent/Caregiver Involvement
The organization considers families' input to be integral to the success of the program. Families are partners with out-of-school-time program providers in designing and implementing the programs. Families are responsible for making their need known and promoting the importance of after-school programming to policy makers and elected officials.

Programmatic Elements
The Task Force identified five programmatic elements that exemplify best practices. Each of these program areas focus on different activities but they share a goal of helping youth develop skills they will need as adults. Out-of-school-time programs, as stated by a state legislator interviewed for the Task Force’s key informant study, should “offer additional opportunities to young people in a way to better themselves.

Program administrators interviewed during the CPRD site visits said they believed their programs, even those with a very specific goal, such as art enhancement, had greater positive effects on the participants than just the development of a single skill. These staff reported they saw positive changes in attitudes and behavior in the youth they served and attributed these changes to such things as caring adult role models and youth exposure to opportunities and environments they previously had not experienced.

Many of the programs visited, while providing a variety of activities for youth, had academic enrichment and tutoring as a core component of their program. Several program administrators indicated they believed that their sports/recreation component of the program served a secondary purpose of “hooking” youth into the program. Once involved, these youth were expected to participate in the academic portion of the program, but were initially motivated to join the program for the recreation opportunities.

►► Academic Enrichment Opportunities
Programs support the academic performance of children and youth through developmentally appropriate activities that strengthen the learning occurring during the school day. Activities supporting local school programming and promoting basic learning skills are incorporated into the program. Appropriate steps are taken so schools and programs can share information about student’s academic performance.
Social-Emotional and Life Skills Building Opportunities and Enrichment Activities
Program elements build social-emotional skills that support healthy development and cultivate leadership and provide academic, cultural and artistic enrichment. Examples include: problem-solving skills, ability to empathize with others, ability to identify one’s own emotions.

Programs Encourage Cultural and Artistic Enrichment
Program elements provide opportunity to experience cultural and artistic enrichment.

Programs Encourage Recreation and Include Health Literacy Components
The program supports a healthy lifestyle. The program includes opportunities for recreation and instruction on nutrition, fitness and healthy behaviors. Programs provide healthy afternoon snacks for participants.

Opportunities to Develop Positive Relationships
Young people are afforded the opportunity to build consistent positive adult relationships and relationships with their peers. Youth programming is based on positive youth development principles, i.e. building on strengths and assets, developing competencies and providing opportunities for leadership. Youth have input into program design and governance.

Policy Recommendations
As the Best Practices Work Group considered the core elements of quality programs, several larger themes emerged when the group discussed barriers to implementing these practices. The task force agreed that changes, often significant, are necessary in the areas of funding, state-level interagency collaboration, capacity building, evaluation and community collaboration in order for the state to build a quality system of out-of-school-time programming. The task force has not yet explored all of the facets of each of these potential barriers but has recommended actions to address some of the most challenging problems and has posed a series of questions that can provide future efforts with the tools for improving state-level policies.

Funding -- Building a system that allows all children and youth, regardless of risk, access to quality, affordable out-of-school-time programs

One of the questions underlying nearly all of the task force’s discussions was who should receive public funds for out-of-school time programs. Should public funding be used to provide services to all school-aged children or should public funds continue to target services to youth most at risk of juvenile delinquency or other negative outcomes? This debate is often referred to as universal (all school-aged youth) vs. targeted (youth, for example, with multiple risk factors such as poor academic achievement or low income) program funding. While universal could imply requiring that services be provided to all eligible youth, the task force was not interested in mandating out-of-school-time programs. The task force agreed that whether the system
provided universal or targeted funding, it should be voluntary, with programs available for participants who wish to attend.

The policy makers interviewed for the Initiative’s key informant study also grappled with the question of who should receive publicly funded programs. The majority of the 11 key informants believed in theory that program funding should be directed to a universal audience but stated that it would be difficult, given the cost and competing legislative priorities, to accomplish this in practice.

Task force members agreed that all youth should have access to the positive benefits of out-of-school-time programs. The challenge then becomes gradually building a system that supports programs for all children and youth. Currently, the demand for programs outpaces the availability of programs. In discussion groups with parents and youth in several communities through the state, the cost of out-of-school-time programs was an issue. Parents with more than one child in discussion groups in Marion, Bloomington, the Southwest Side of Chicago and the southern suburbs of Cook County stated that they had difficulty paying for programs.

A program administrator from one program visited by CPRD indicated that the amount of programming they were able to deliver was decreasing as a result of funding cuts that reduced the amount of hours the program was available. In fact, in several of the programs visited, youth highlighted the need for longer program hours and program availability on Saturdays.

**Strategic Questions:**
1. What level of funding is needed to support positive outcomes for all school-aged children?
2. How do we prioritize which groups we reach through government funded programs?
3. How do we create a systematic approach for securing long-term federal/state/local funding and private and foundation funding and reach a healthy balance among these funding sources?
4. How do we determine the level of funding needed in each community for out-of-school-time programs?
5. How do we bring additional dollars into after-school programming?
6. What is the best method to provide funding for programs? (For example, vouchers, subsidies, grants)?

►►►**Priority action:**
- To make after-school programming available to more children and communities in Illinois, the state must coordinate state and federal categorical funding to ensure that programs are maximizing their impact, develop strategies to increase private, local and foundation support for after-school programming and expand government funding of these programs.
Secondary actions:
- Explore tax incentives and innovative tax policies to generate additional public and private funding for after-school programming;
- To ensure that there is adequate funding to sustain programs, government grants should include a flexible plan for providers and communities to contribute monetary or in-kind support to the program.
- Improving the effectiveness of funding for out-of-school-time programs.
- Government funding should support programs’ ability to develop and expand their capacity – including conducting needs assessments, developing and implementing evaluation tools, assisting with the additional costs in making programs accessible for youth with special needs and working with schools and community organizations.
- Some federally funded out-of-school-time programs allow programs to carry funding into the next fiscal year. This policy may allow programs to better respond to unexpected needs or changes in the program. The state should explore the effects of this policy and consider the impact of modifying current law to allow state funding to extend into the next fiscal year.

State-level Interagency Collaboration

A lack of coordination among state agencies was a common concern as Task Force members discussed barriers to achieving best practices. CPRD in their site visits found examples where program directors sought funding from a range of sources in order to adequately sustain the program only to have to comply with conflicting reporting requirements. In addition, diverse funding requirements may create confusion for families when a program is multiply funded and may be known by different names to different communities or constituencies.

Strategic Questions:
1. What state-level policies can make out-of-school-time services less fragmented and more responsive to local needs?
2. What is required for state agencies to collaborate and avoid duplicating services?
3. What are the barriers and opportunities to collaboration?

Priority actions:
- State agencies that have a focus on youth should create a forum to discuss common procedures for training, credentialing, meeting fiscal and programmatic reporting requirements and evaluating programs.
- The Illinois Clearinghouse, initiated under Governor Ryan, monitors federal funding opportunities to streamline the process for state agencies to apply for federal funding. The Clearinghouse should be continued in the next administration so that there is a coordinated system for state agencies to apply for federal grants that will meet state needs and integrate the programming into the network of out-of-school-time services.
Capacity Building -- Providing continued support to existing programs and enabling new programs to establish the infrastructure needed to support quality programming

Developing the capacity of programs to provide quality services to as many participants as possible for as long of a duration as possible involves more than just adequate funding. Workforce, management and facility issues play an important role in building program capacity. However, it is difficult to extricate funding from this discussion since adequate funds can determine whether or not programs have the resources they need, such as a program evaluator, grant writer, or evaluator to prove their effectiveness or to alter budgets. As a result of site visits, CPRD also found that greater funding appeared to have a significant impact on the staff development process. Some of the larger, more heavily resourced programs employed management staff with extensive staff development expertise and experience.

Strategic Questions:
Program funding questions
1. What’s an ideal funding timeline that encourages program sustainability?
2. How should upfront expenses be handled?
3. How should cost of program planning, evaluation, facilitating community and school involvement and needs assessment be handled?
4. How can programs increase financial support by public and private funders for administrative costs?

Workforce questions
1. How do we attract and maintain a skilled workforce?
2. How can we enhance the knowledge and skills of the current workforce?
3. How can we retain qualified staff?
4. Is there enough staff in the field? How are programs utilizing volunteers?

Facility questions
1. How do we maximize the use of existing public facilities to make them available to meet the need for out-of-school-time programs?
2. Are there currently enough facilities to meet the need?

Management questions
1. What elements do programs need to build a successful management plan?
2. How do we build capacity of programs for self-evaluation?
3. How do we build the capacity of state agencies to administer programs well and promote standards based on best practices?

Priority actions:
- Build a system for technical assistance to disseminate information on best practices, link programs and build community capacity to provide needs assessment, training, service delivery and evaluation to increase a community’s overall capacity to provide out-of-school-time services.
- Identify, collect and utilize common information across state agencies responsible for out-of-school-time programs through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. As part
of the same effort, the state should explore the use of a common community RFP. Examples of common information include:

- target population;
- service area;
- collaborative partners;
- community funding sources/programs and demonstration of how outcomes will enhance/fill a gap;
- community needs and resources;
- goals, timelines, outcomes;
- use of evidence-based strategies, where possible.

►►►Secondary actions:
- Develop a Best Practices Institute to equip state administrators with knowledge, support and tools to adopt an evidence-based system, including outcome-based planning
- Develop and maintain a state and local web data link for program planning and grant writing. Provide access to data from State agencies.
- Publicly funded programs are expected to meet outcomes that support the stated goals for programs. (See mission and principles.)
- Leverage all funds for coordinated service delivery, evaluation, training, professional development, needs assessment, conferences and media.
- The state should coordinate, promote and fund intensive ongoing training to out-of-school-time programs regardless of the programs funding source.
- Further analysis is needed to understand why some counties in the state have no out-of-school-time programs and what it would take to provide programs.

►►Evaluation -- All programs, regardless of the source of their funding, evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions with children and youth.

Strategic questions:
1. How do we know programs work?
2. How can state agencies clarify their expectations about program evaluation?
3. How can we make state evaluation criteria flexible enough to allow for unique community needs?
4. How do we ensure that programs have the technical assistance needed to develop and implement program evaluations?
5. How do we ensure the funding is available for high-quality program evaluations?
6. How do state agencies and individual programs best utilize evaluation data to plan for and improve programs?

►►►Priority action:
- Illinois should create a statewide mechanism to provide information and technical assistance to local communities on the outcomes of program evaluations and on the effectiveness of planning and program implementation so that local communities can utilize these results to build more effective programs.
Secondary actions:
- Government funders should agree on the core data they want collected to prove outcomes. Outcomes should be measured the same way with the same data. Government agencies should collect the same data in the same format (by zip codes or regions, etc.).
- Public and private funders should support collaborations between researchers and the provider community.

Community Collaboration

The task force agreed that community collaboration and involvement is essential to the success of out-of-school-time programs. The task force considered many strategies for increasing community collaboration but current funding restrictions often prevent programs from building the partnerships they need to thrive. Participants in the Initiative report that grants that require the program to build community collaborations can also require that all of the employee’s time be spent on direct programming. Without funding that supports community collaboration, it will not occur.

Strategic Questions:
1. How do we define community collaboration? What are the expectations for local communities and local providers?
2. How do communities collaborate in the delivery of after-school services?
3. How do we encourage collaboration at the community level?
4. What are the opportunities and challenges to community level collaboration?
5. How do programs engage parents and provide learning opportunities for parents?
6. How do programs work with other sectors in the community?
7. What are incentives for local business and other private organizations and members of the community to become involved?
8. What policies promote the use of private funding or foundation grants for out-of-school-time programming?

Priority action:
- Public funds should support a coordinator to help communities collaborate in planning for and providing out-of-school-time services.

Secondary action:
- State agencies will collaborate and expect the same of local communities. The state will encourage the federal government to support the collaborative efforts.

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1 Illinois After-school Initiative Site Visit Report produced by the Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD) at the University of Illinois, August 2002.