

education 24/7

EXPANDING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NORTH CAROLINA STUDENTS
TO BE CAREER AND COLLEGE READY



THE RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FORUM'S XV STUDY GROUP.
A YEAR-LONG PROCESS IN WHICH LEADING BUSINESS PEOPLE,
EDUCATORS, AND ELECTED OFFICIALS EXAMINED EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE THE TRADITIONAL SCHOOL DAY.
// SPRING 2013

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OPPORTUNITY
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CHILDREN
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LEARN
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CONSTANTLY
EXPANDING
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The opportunity for children to learn is constantly expanding. This is nothing new. Even though learning is often assumed to be constrained to a desk and chair in a brick and mortar building, it is not. The world is a classroom. Children discover science when they wander outside in the summertime to play in a stream and watch a tadpole become a frog. Today, the opportunity to learn from that discovery is expanding. After the frog hops away, a curious mind, a few strokes on a keyboard, and an Internet connection can lead to a whole learning experience outside the classroom.

This one moment in a child's life is an example of the world of discovery and learning open to children if we foster learning in all environments, not just a classroom, and make room for education to take place 24/7 through Expanded Learning Opportunities.

How will we take advantage of this new era of learning? Will we keep pace with our students and encourage their curiosity and innate ability to learn, or will we demand that learning continue to look the way it did when we were in school?



introduction

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A COMPLETE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Currently, a student's learning takes place in three areas: traditional schools, communities and families, and other Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs). Traditional schools are charged with serving every child, communities and families offer the foundation for learning and growth, and ELOs are a space where communities, families, and schools are coming together to offer a fuller, more enriched environment of learning for children and youth. Each of these realms of a child's education has benefits and drawbacks, but together they create a full and enriching learning experience and make **EDUCATION 24/7**.



EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Self-directed and guided learning intersect
- Space for school-community collaboration
- Resources may grow or diminish, based on availability of resources in the community and work by facilitators to gather support
- Accountable to stakeholders, investors, parents, schools, students, etc.
- Location may be shared with schools, churches, community buildings, parks, etc.
- Independent learning and individualized learning

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COMMUNITIES & FAMILIES

- Resources vary by time, location, and individual family
- Opportunities for exploration
- Freedom in choice for learning
- Self-directed learning

TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

- Structured learning, defined by curricula, benchmarks, and expectations
- Takes place during traditional school hours, typically 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., 9 months a year
- Measures student results and outcomes
- Resources determined by Federal, State, and Local funds



EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

From the time children enter school at the age of five until the time they graduate, students spend less than 20% of their waking hours in schools each year (Krishnamurthi et al. 2013). The other 80% of students' waking hours outside of school can provide an enormous opportunity for learning and growth. For some students, these hours are filled with piano lessons, basketball practice, summer jobs, family vacations, and a wealth of other opportunities for exploration, learning, and growth. For many students, however, these hours are often spent alone and unsupervised, in front of a TV, or, in attempts to ease the boredom, in discovering activities including drugs, alcohol, criminal activity, and other risky behaviors that are detrimental to their growth and productivity. In a time of increasing childhood obesity and Type II diabetes, our children can benefit from more and better physical activity outside of school to stay healthy.

North Carolina currently has 472,169 school-age children who are left alone and unsupervised in the hours after school (Afterschool Alliance 2013). The hours between 3pm and 6pm, when students are released from school and before their parents are home from work, are the hours in which children are most likely to become teen parents, be involved in criminal activity, or be victimized by crime. A wealth of research makes it clear that the summer is an especially important time for the path of a student's education. Most children, regardless of socioeconomic status, lose two months of grade-level equivalency in mathematics computational skills each summer. Low-income children lose more than two months in reading achievement, while children from middle income families actually make slight reading gains. The summer learning loss of all students means teachers spend the first weeks and months of the school year catching students up on material from the previous year, rather than moving forward. Research from Johns Hopkins University shows that by the ninth grade, summer learning loss accounts for two-thirds of the achievement gap in reading between low-income students and their middle class peers (Huggins 2013).

North Carolina's public schools are making tremendous strides in student outcomes. Our graduation rate is higher than ever, our scores in mathematics and reading are increasing and as a state we are keeping pace both nationally and internationally. Still, there is incredible room for growth. But where?

School, as it operates today, is a fixed system, limited in its offerings to students by time restraints and the ebb and flow of resources. School will always be a place where students go to learn, but we would suggest that in this new age of information and with the constantly changing landscape of skills and knowledge required of our students, traditional school on its own will not be enough. We must use the opportunities outside of school hours, often with non-traditional resources and in non-traditional settings, to make sure our students are growing and learning in a way that will prepare them for a globally competitive economy and a world that does not stop. If we challenge our sense of tradition, our graduation rates could be higher and our mathematics and reading scores could skyrocket. We have the potential to surpass other states and nations if we focus both within and outside the classroom and expand opportunities for learning.

From the time children enter school at the age of five until the time they graduate, students spend less than 20% of their waking hours in schools each year

Considerable research has shown the value of ELOs to a child's education, and to the ongoing promotion of an economically viable society. As the demands of the workforce grow, and resources to schools remain relatively static, ELOs are in a unique position to fill the gaps left in a student's learning experience. ELOs reflect learning environments beyond the natural limitations, resources, time frame, and locations that characterize a traditional school and school day. ELOs move beyond structures that traditionally define the school day and year and include afterschool programs, summer school programs, digital learning, and mentoring and apprenticeships in alignment with the school day to create a more enriched and expanded learning experience. These opportunities are meant to complement, not replace, the traditional offerings of a school to a student.

ELOs MAKE AN IMPACT

Harvard Family Research Project offers an overview of six evaluations and two research studies of expanded learning programs. As the update shows, study after study of expanded learning time programs finds outstanding benefits for students:

BENEFITS OF ELOs

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT & SCHOOL FUNCTIONING

INCREASED OR IMPROVED:

- Test scores in English and math
- Course pass rates in English and math
- Academic grades in English and math
- High School credits earned
- On-time progression towards graduation
- Persistence in high school

- High school graduation
- Homework completion rates
- School attendance rates
- Academic confidence
- School effort

REDUCED:

- Skipping school

PREVENTION

FEWER OR REDUCED:

- Associations with negative peers
- Times stopped by police
- Aggression

LESS LIKELIHOOD OF:

- Carrying a weapon
- Smoking cigarettes
- Smoking marijuana
- Drinking alcohol
- Becoming sexually active

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

INCREASED OR IMPROVED:

- Future connectedness (how often youth participants think about their future and how their current activities help them prepare for the future)

- Integrity (knowing right from wrong)
- Community service involvement

REDUCED:

- Shyness

Adapted from page 3 of "Out-Of-School Time Programs for Older Youth," by the Harvard Family Research Project, May 2011.

A 2009 report from the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association states: "Participation in high quality ELOs is linked to improvements in academic achievement, school attendance, student engagement, work-study habits, and social and emotional development. In addition, ELOs offer support for working families and can help foster stronger links among schools, families, and communities. The supports and services that high quality ELOs provide are particularly important for low-income and minority youth who often lack sustained access to enriching activities and academic support during non-school hours" (Princiotta and Fortune 2009).

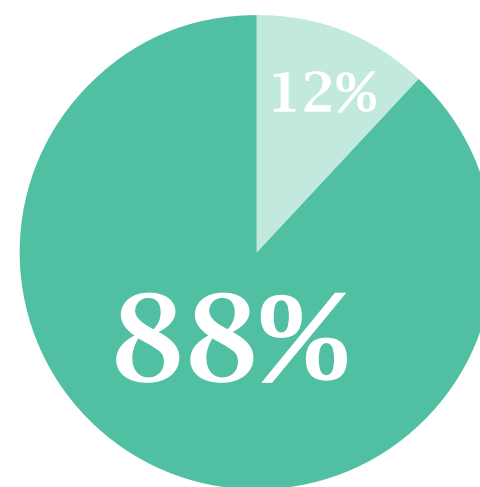
The need is great for additional ELOs in North Carolina. Currently, 31% of North Carolina's K-12 children are responsible for taking care of themselves after school. These children spend an average of nine hours per week unsupervised. Approximately 12% of NC's K-12 children participate in one of the state's 6,000 afterschool programs. On average, afterschool participants spend 10 hours over three days per week in afterschool programs. Of NC children not currently involved in an afterschool program, 36% would be likely to participate if a program were available in their community. In addition to the 18% of NC parents that have children participating in summer programs, an additional 56% are interested in enrolling their children in a program (NC CAP Brochure 2012).

The evidence is great that ELOs boost educational outcomes and strengthen communities and schools. However, there is tremendous need for more of these opportunities for students across North Carolina.

Currently, 31% of North Carolina's K-12 children are responsible for taking care of themselves after school.

The good news is you can help. We all can help create ELOs for North Carolina's children.

In the following sections you will be taken through a framework for the initial stages of starting ELOs in your community. This study will also walk you through a discussion of policy considerations that can create flexibility and encourage local authority in administering these opportunities for students. It is our hope that this document will provide a pathway for creating ELOs that fill in the gaps, creating an environment for all students to learn 24/7.



K-12 Children Participating in Afterschool Programs

- K-12 children in Afterschool Programs
- K-12 children NOT in Afterschool Programs

ELO Framework

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (ELOs) FRAMEWORK

THE VISION: ¹ //////////////////////////////////////

While our schools are doing an amazing job, North Carolina's education model is based on an agrarian calendar when it comes to time spent in school, and based on an industrial, factory model for the process of how students are educated. Educational models structured around the agrarian calendar and based on an industrial model served the state well during a time period in the state's history, but that time period is over.

When we continue to follow structural models in our schools that do not make sense for today's economy or the educational needs of our students, we run the risk of stifling the creativity with which teachers teach, restraining principals from directing our schools, forcing superintendents to be managers and not leaders, and disconnecting our education system from opportunities that can expand learning. Our education system can no longer be strengthened in a single environment; we need not only our schools but the community and additional educational opportunities outside the classroom to make our students competitive globally. Our students need Education 24/7.

Currently, North Carolina schools must comply with State policy that dictates a school start date in August and an end date in June. Many of our students begin school in August after learning on their own for two or three summer months. Some have access to resources and opportunities, but many do not. At the start of the school year, and every school day thereafter, our students arrive at school between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. and leave by 3:00 p.m. Students are limited in what they learn due to the number of hours and structure of the normal school-day environment. They are constantly hindered by the number of hours and days available for learning and the school building where we force our education to be structured.

While we have exceptional teachers and school administrators that go above and beyond their current roles to provide students with educational opportunities that our current school framework limits, we need more

Expanded Learning Opportunities not limited by time and buildings.

Now imagine a cohesive educational framework that brings together three components: traditional schools, communities and families, and Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs). This new framework removes time and buildings from being constants in the educational process and makes them variables alongside every other educational aspect that creates a high-performing educational system. The new learning environment would provide opportunities for students to attend a **BEFORE-SCHOOL PROGRAM** prior to beginning school. While in school during the traditional hours/days, student learning opportunities would be expanded beyond the buildings to allow formal learning to take place through possible avenues such as **DISTANCE LEARNING** and **MENTORSHIP/APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS**. Also, with the new framework learning does not stop when the bell rings between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. The new learning framework provides **AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS** and **COMMUNITY INITIATIVES** that continue to educate our students from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and even when the school year ends in May or June, learning does not stop. **SUMMER SCHOOLS** and **SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS** for all students continue when traditional schools are not in session so students do not experience summer learning loss. The opportunity to continue to learn over the summer allows students to begin the next school year at the same level of proficiency or higher from which they left the previous school year. The goal of the new framework is for students to grow and learn through several educational avenues beyond the traditional August to May school year and 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. school day that does not take into account all the additional hours and days that students could be learning outside the confines of a school building. The way to offer this educational experience is to not only focus on our great schools but also ensure all of our students have access to individualized learning systems through great ELOs.

¹This Framework has been adapted from *Beyond the Bell: Start-Up Guide for Afterschool Programs*, 2005, by Learning Points Associates, and from *Moving Towards Success: Framework for After-School Programs*, 2005, by the C.S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice. Some of the concepts for this section are inspired by *Beyond Walls, Clocks and Calendars: Rethinking Public Education in Colorado*, 2011, by the Expanded Learning Opportunities Commission of the Colorado Legacy Foundation



THE DEFINITION: *////////////////////////////////////*

The first step in creating ELOs is to understand the meaning and framework of ELOs. The remainder of this document will act as a guide in developing ELOs and policies to make ELOs more accessible. However, before starting the framework to create an ELO, it is imperative to truly understand the concept of an Expanded Learning Opportunity. Expanded Learning refers to any program offered during out-of-school time to serve students in

excelling in education and life. Such opportunities can occur before school, after school, on weekends, in the summer, and during the school day outside the traditional school building. These opportunities can take place in a variety of locations – a school, a faith-based activity building, local Boys and Girls Clubs, a YMCA, a park recreational facility, or the facilities of any community-based or private organization (McElvain et al. 2005).

EXPANDED LEARNING

refers to any program offered during out-of-school time to serve students in excelling in education and life.

HOW TO USE AND NOT USE THIS DOCUMENT: *////////////////////////////////////*

The most efficient way to use the Framework presented in this document is as a start-up guide and a strategic plan on how a community can effectively implement expanded learning opportunities. The Framework provides an overview and beginning process for the initial phases of planning and organizing ELOs in a community. However, since there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to creating ELOs in an area, it is up to stakeholders working on school/community projects to use this Framework as a roadmap and not a sole directive on how to create ELOs. The Framework does not examine management, curricula and programming, or specific

evaluation issues but instead sets the reader on a pathway to bring people together to start ELOs in their community. As your plans for ELOs are developed and initial resources are secured, then stakeholders and leaders of the ELOs can connect with the North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs (NC CAP) for additional support in next steps around program design. NC CAP (<http://www.nccap.net>) acts as an information clearinghouse for expanded learning and can direct ELO leaders to a broader base of information on ELO implementation.

THE BEGINNING – WHY AN ELO?

It usually takes a strong leader or a group of leaders to begin the conversation about starting ELOs in a community. As the leader(s), the first question to ask is, “why do I want ELOs and what do I want from ELOs for students? For example, if you are seeking to improve Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education in your community, then the process and the stakeholders convened to develop an ELO plan reflect interdisciplinary learning, understanding of specific disciplines, engaging hands-on learning activities, and strategies for exposing students to future career options. ELOs can be structured to tackle local problems where students work with adults to solve real issues.

Beyond what type of ELO(s) you want for your community, several other questions need to be brought to the table prior to beginning this process of creating expanded learning initiatives. Do you want ELOs in schools and/or in community centers? When do you want ELOs to occur for your community? While these are only a few of the many questions that need to be discussed prior to starting the creation process for ELOs, the good news is that all the questions do not need answering now. They simply should be discussed and thought about as you begin the process of developing ELOs for your community. The North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs has developed tools to help you address these first steps in developing ELOs. NC CAP’s website section, “Starting An Afterschool Program,” (<http://www.nccap.net/starting-an-afterschool-program>) can facilitate your thought processes for beginning an ELO.

What Do You Want an ELO to Accomplish?

The following is a list of possible goals, short- and long-term, for Expanded Learning Opportunities.

ACADEMIC AND OTHER LEARNING GOALS

- Improved literacy and communication skills for all participants (including English language learners) in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and technology
- Improved mathematics skills
- Increased knowledge and skills in science and social studies
- Increased knowledge, participation, and skills in the visual and performing arts
- Increased awareness of real-life uses of academic skills

HOMEWORK GOALS

- Increased success and achievement in school
- Acquisition and use of independent learning skills
- Facilitate communication among home, school, and students to support student learning

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL GOALS

- Improved social skills
- Increased leadership and responsibility
- Reduced at-risk behavior
- Improved emotional well-being

HEALTH AND SAFETY GOALS

- Improved nutrition and health practices
- Improved physical development
- Improved personal safety

COMMUNITY GOALS

- Improved community awareness and engagement
- Increased support to working parents

Adapted from Beyond the Bell: Start-Up Guide for Afterschool Programs, 2005, by Learning Points Associates, and from Moving Towards Success: Framework for After-School Programs, 2005, by the C.S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice. Reprinted with permission.

CONVENE KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR ELOs

Now that you are, or your group is, beginning to explore expanded learning opportunities for the community, it is important to begin bringing in key stakeholders for discussions about developing ELOs. While assistance from expected stakeholders, such as school and education leaders in the community, is imperative to developing ELOs, the stakeholders list should expand beyond the normal education community. It can include community

partners, health professionals, law enforcement, the faith-based organizations, elected officials, local foundations, and the United Way, to name a few. Students and their families should also be engaged during the planning process. All stakeholders that join the conversation on creating ELOs for the community should bring data about the needs of the populations they serve to assist in better understanding what type of ELOs are needed.

Recommendations for Key Stakeholders of ELOs

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayors
City council members
County commissioners
Legislators

JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMUNITY

Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils (JCPCs) –
District Attorneys
Chief Court Counselors
Community Corrections / Probation Officers
Indigent Defense Service - Juvenile Defenders
Chiefs of Police
Sheriffs
Police Activities League
Local Youth Advisory Groups

HEALTH COMMUNITY

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Partners
Department of Social Services Directors
NC School Health Connection
Eat Smart Move More
Local Coalitions -
Parks & Recreation Centers

4-H / Cooperative Extension
Local Farmers Markets
School Nurses
Local Homeless Education Outreach Coordinators

EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Local School District Transformation Teams
Dropout Prevention Local Committees
Title I Directors
Local Boards of Education Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
School Administrators
Community Colleges - Universities -
Military-based Schools
Local STEM Community Collaboratives
Local Education Foundations

BUSINESS/FUNDER

PARTNERS
Chambers of Commerce
Local Banks and Credit Unions
United Ways
Local Community Foundations

Civic Groups
Junior Service Leagues
Women’s Clubs WUNC Pathways, Out Of Community
Foundations
Local Newspaper
Education Reporters
STEM Corporations Foundations

OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Museums
NC CAP Afterschool Liaisons
NC Society of Hispanic Professionals
Parent Teacher Association
Faith-Based Community -
Communities in Schools

STATE RESOURCES

NC Center for Afterschool Programs (NC CAP)
NC STEM Community Collaborative
NC PTA
Action for Children
Child Advocacy Institute
NC Center for Nonprofits
NC Association on Volunteer Administration

Adapted from Beyond the Bell: Start-Up Guide for Afterschool Programs, 2005, by Learning Points Associates, and from Moving Towards Success: Framework for After-School Programs, 2005, by the C.S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice. Reprinted with permission.

WHAT ELOs ARE NEEDED FOR YOUR COMMUNITY? CONDUCT AN EXTERNAL ANALYSIS OF ELOs!

Even though you and your key stakeholders in the expanded learning community are starting the discussion of creating ELOs, more information is likely still needed. It is time to go beyond this group to understand which ELOs would benefit your community and what ELOs do not need to be replicated in your community. It is time to do an external analysis for Expanded Learning Opportunities to determine what community needs should be addressed that will be worthwhile to the students and the community the ELOs will serve. An external analysis includes four activities: environmental scanning, mapping current ELO programs, forecasting, and assessing (Morrison 1992).

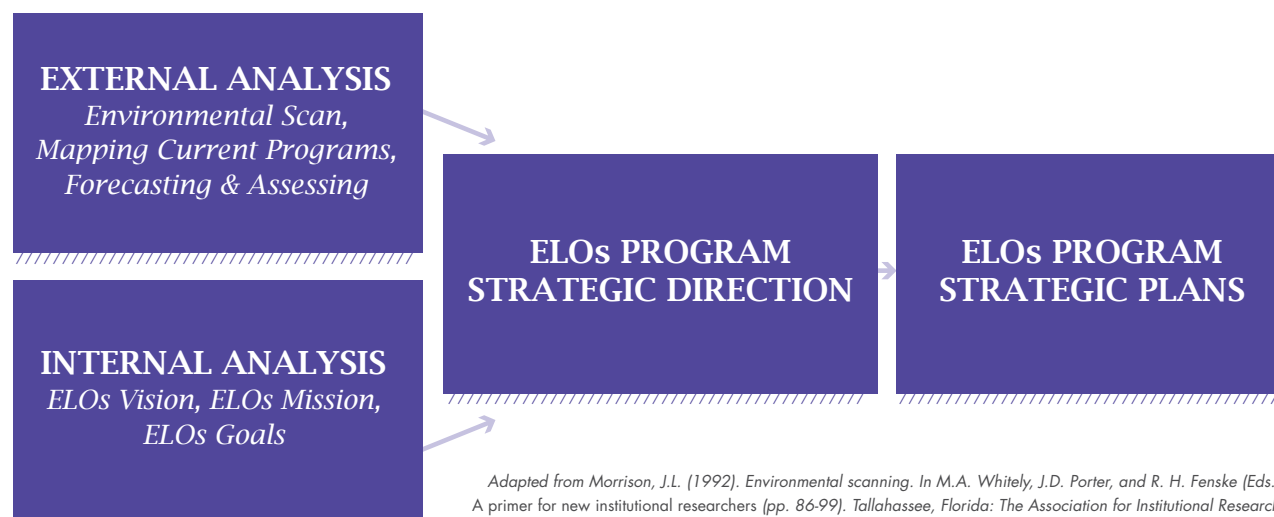
The first activity is a community needs assessment, which can be conducted through parent, student, and community surveys that examine what type of ELOs are needed in the community, what populations need to be served, and what desired outcomes are expected. External tools can be utilized to assist in conducting an environmental scan of your community. For example, the North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs' *Roadmap to Need* (<http://www.nccap.net/media/pages/NC-CAP-A-Roadmap-to-Need.pdf>) can assist in aligning your ELOs with areas of need for the community.

The next activity is to map current ELO programs in your community. It is important to find other ELO programs in schools, faith-based organizations, and the community to avoid overlapping existing programs. Mapping current programs will ensure the longevity of the ELO program you are creating by allowing you to work closely with other programs in the area to create a cohesive ELO system for your community.

The next activity to conduct during your external analysis of ELOs is to forecast the possible future direction of your community needs and resources. Once you forecast the direction of your community you can assess the impact the future of your community will have on your ELOs and the ability for your developing ELOs to continue meeting the needs of the community.

Once an external analysis is completed it can aid in the development of ELOs for your community by combining the findings from the external analysis with the future ELOs' vision, mission, and goals in order to create a strategic direction and plan. This process is depicted in the figure below.

The Role of External Analysis in ELO's Strategic Planning



CREATE AN ELO COUNCIL FOR THE COMMUNITY

Now that you have an understanding of why you need ELOs and have brought key stakeholders together and have completed an external analysis, it is time to develop a leadership council on ELOs for the community. The ELO Council will be responsible for developing ELO programs from their initial start-up while ensuring these opportunities become a reality for the community. The ELO Council can be directly linked to and pursued through a school board/government structure, a community-driven initiative, or a public/private initiative. However, the Council needs to consist of a variety of individuals who can ensure the creation of ELOs, some of whom are already part of the process as key stakeholders. The Council differs from key stakeholders because Council members will have to devote numerous hours to assisting in the full creation of the ELO programs compared to stakeholders who act as additional sources of information and resources for ELO programs. The Council needs to consist of (McElvain et al. 2005):

- Resource individuals who understand the fiscal responsibility behind starting ELOs,
- School-linked individuals who can access school resources and knowledge in assisting in the development of ELOs.
- Private-sector leaders who can act as a useful support and champion for the ELOs program for the community.

- Community leaders who are already aware of possible avenues for ELOs in the community and additional resources for ELOs from the nonprofit and faith-based community.
- Elected officials do not necessarily have to be represented on the council, but need to be in on the discussion of developing ELOs for the community so they can act as champions for the initiative and provide leadership in bringing together community partners.

Once the Council is created, members should explore existing resources and additional resources in the community for ELOs in order to build support for the initiative and put it into operation. The Council needs to explore possible funding opportunities for programs outside the realm of government-supported expenses. The Council should create a strategic plan for what type of ELOs will be created. The Council will answer questions such as what will be the goals and populations served by the ELOs; what will be the program elements for the ELOs; and what will be intended outcomes for the ELOs. The Council can also recommend policy to hire an ELO coordinator for the local community (see Section III: Local and State ELO Policy Considerations page 39 for more information).

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE FORMATS FOR EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES?

Now it's time for the Council to begin the work of selecting and implementing an ELO. The external analysis has revealed what needs and resources exist in the community, and the Council has an idea of what they hope to bring to their community through ELOs. Below is an explanation of

several types of ELOs that can be utilized individually or in conjunction with each other. This list is not exhaustive, but provides an overview of the variety of formats ELOs can take, and provides examples of ELOs in communities across North Carolina.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Afterschool programs are offered by a school, community organization, private organization, faith group, or any combination of the above, to students in the afterschool hours, most typically between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Research shows these hours to be a crucial time for kids. The hours immediately after school are peak hours for

juvenile crime and gang activity; children being victimized by crime; experimentation with sex, drugs, tobacco and alcohol; and the prime time for teens being involved in car accidents. In addition, children in areas without a safe place to be active from "3 to 6" are faced with higher obesity rates and ensuing health issues, including a rise in the

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS *(cont)*

incidence of childhood Type II diabetes. NC CAP's "3pm to 6pm Campaign" provides additional information on the critical hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and offers a wealth of resources for addressing these issues in your community through afterschool programs. To learn more, visit www.nccap.net.

Afterschool programs provide a safe space for children during critical hours, while serving a host of other goals: supporting learning and boosting achievement, promoting healthy psychological and social development, and extending the school day with practice and experience to reinforce skills and lessons. The purpose of an expanded

learning model for afterschool programs is not to continue the school day, but to expand on and enhance the learning experience. While some afterschool programs are heavily academically focused, they have a greater impact if the activities and delivery of lessons function differently from that of a traditional classroom. Afterschool programs are an opportunity to provide more one-on-one assistance, hands-on experience, active learning, and other forms of education that boost student outcomes, address specific community needs, and enhance the education offered in a traditional classroom. The exact form of an afterschool program depends on the needs of the community and the resources of the providers.

BEFORE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Building in ELOs to the beginning of a school day can be a great way to boost student achievement and make use of a time when students are normally unengaged. Particularly for elementary school through early high school, before students have the option of driving themselves to school, students find themselves at the school building long before the start of the school day, depending on school start time and parent work hours or bus schedules. In most schools, early-arriving students are directed to the cafeteria or gymnasium to sit and wait, but these 30-45 minutes can be used to offer all the benefits of a great afterschool-type program in a time that kids are already at school. This morning time slot can be taken advantage of for Spanish clubs, student leadership meetings, peer tutoring, etc. Incorporating school-issued breakfast into a before-school

program is an added bonus and an incredible opportunity to set up students for a healthier lifestyle and a more attentive day of learning. Studies of school breakfast programs have found that students who eat breakfast at school show improved academic achievement – especially in vocabulary, mathematics and standardized tests – have better attendance records, are less likely to be tardy and exhibit fewer behavioral and psychological problems. Children who regularly eat breakfast also have a better quality of nutrient intake and are less likely to be overweight or obese. For more information on school breakfast, download the <http://www.neahin.org/educator-resources/start-school-with-breakfast.html> from the National Education Association Health Information Network.



Before-School & Afterschool Program Highlight: EAST DURHAM CHILDREN'S INITIATIVE

The East Durham Children's Initiative (EDCI) is an innovative program working to help kids in a 120-block area of East Durham graduate from high school, ready for college or career. They do this by providing and partnering with local organizations to offer a comprehensive pipeline of services for children and families starting from before the time a child is born through elementary, middle, and high school. Interventions include early childhood services helping to prepare kids for school before they enter kindergarten, as well as out-of-school learning opportunities such as afterschool and summer programs. EDCI recently partnered with the downtown Durham Rotary to

provide volunteers for a before school reading initiative at Neal Middle School called Neal Reads, in addition to their Reading Ranger program offered to students at YE Smith Elementary during the school day. EDCI's target elementary school, Y.E. Smith, also extends the school day by one hour every day to ensure that all students get the instruction they need. Other EDCI services target family engagement, food insecurity, obesity prevention, literacy, the arts, access to resources, and community-building activities. For more information about EDCI, visit their website at www.edci.org or follow them on Facebook.



Afterschool Program Highlight: US TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Afterschool programs often play an important role in promoting healthy lifestyles for youth. With the growing epidemic of childhood obesity, afterschool programs are stepping up to serve as opportune places for kids to learn about health and wellness, practice good nutrition, and participate in physical activity.

The US Tennis Association (USTA) is partnering with NC CAP for a multi-year effort to provide tennis training to afterschool programs across the state. The integration of tennis play into afterschool programming results in a health and wellness component while increasing student awareness around the lifelong sport of tennis. Participating afterschool programs receive training for facilitating "playtime" tennis activities based on the USTA's special "10 and Under" format. Programs are issued special tennis

equipment that allows tennis play within multi-purpose rooms, gymnasiums, outdoor play pads and even on actual tennis courts with specifically designed tennis nets, tennis racquets and tennis balls.

VISIT NC CAP's page at <http://www.nccap.net/hot-topics/health-and-wellness/united-states-tennis-association/> for more, or connect with the USTA North Carolina at www.nctennis.com and click on "Community Tennis."

VISIT www.MoveMoreAfterschoolNC.com, a website to support physical activity in after-school programs. Each page on the site provides helpful tools and resources to support the recommendations in the Move More North Carolina: Recommended Standards for After-School Physical Activity.



Afterschool Program Highlight: YOUNG SCHOLARS PROGRAM GREENE COUNTY, NC

Greene County Schools' *Young Scholars*, an afterschool and extended-year program, is currently provided for students in grades 2-5. The program serves students with high 2s and low 3s on EOG testing. Participants are also recommended by a teacher or administrator as possessing latent and untapped talents and worthy of the challenge offered by the program. Small instructional settings (ratio of 1:10) allow for direct teacher/student contact. Since its beginning in 2007, the program has offered hands-on "learn by doing" activities that are differentiated, evoke higher-order thinking, are inquiry and product-based, and aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Activities

focusing on global communications, literacy, math, the fine arts, nutrition/fitness, character education and science are typical of each session. S.T.E.M. activities and reading have been a central focus of programming during the past two school years. In addition to "in-class activities," the program has provided an array of travel experiences for students and their parents. Funding for the program was initially provided by the Collaborative Project, a 21st Century Initiative of the North Carolina General Assembly and the NC Public School Forum. The program has also received funding from the Golden LEAF Foundation.



SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

A wealth of research has made it clear that all children experience learning loss when they do not engage in educational activities over the summer. All students lose about two months of mathematics skills over the summer. Some students from low-income homes also lose more than two months of reading ability, while their middle-income peers actually make slight gains. By the time students reach the 9th grade, more than half of the achievement gap between income groups can be explained by the unequal experiences of summer learning opportunities. What's more, a summer without learning often goes hand in hand with a summer of little activity, and in many cases poor nutrition for many children. Most children gain weight more rapidly when they are out of school during summer break. (National Summer Learning Association 2009)

The case for providing summer learning opportunities to all children is strong. Children in higher-income families often

take part in a variety of enriching learning experiences over the summer, from family vacations to summer camps to academic-enrichment programs. In lower-income families these experiences are often challenging to afford, and even in well-off families, parent work schedules, the cost of many quality summer programs, and other factors get in the way of children having enriching summers. Summer ELOs can be molded to fit any combination of student ages or needs and can be built to address any specific community need or issue established by the environmental scan. The National Summer Learning Association (<http://www.summerlearning.org/>) has a variety of resources to help you fund, design, and launch any type of summer-learning opportunity for your community. North Carolina has a number of foundations and corporations that fund summer camps and other programs for K-12 students.

Approaches for Successful Summer Learning

- Commit to having a summer program by the end of December; and continue planning meetings regularly.
- Early on, develop a teacher recruitment and selection process that encourages motivated, high-quality teachers to work in the program.
- Teacher training should allow teachers the opportunity to run mock trials of their lessons.
- When possible, include field trips and other enrichment activities that provide experiences and skill-building opportunities, as well as a "camp-like" feel to summer learning.
- In scheduling, take into consideration transportation needs, parent work schedules, and meals and snacks.
- Publicize the goals and benefits of the program early on to students and parents to build interest. Recruit early, and establish clear attendance expectations from the beginning.



Summer Learning Program Highlight: BELL (BUILDING EDUCATED LEADERS FOR LIFE)

BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life) (<http://www.experiencebell.org/>) is a nonprofit organization that partners with schools and school districts to expand learning time for students in grades K-8. Its BELL Summer model is a full-day learning experience that pairs rigorous academic instruction with enrichment courses, field trips, and community service projects to strengthen students' literacy and math skills, self-confidence, and social skills.

In 2012, BELL partnered with Project L.I.F.T. and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to serve 1,058 "scholars" in BELL Summer, and with Winston-Salem / Forsyth County Schools to enroll 1,062 scholars. By mobilizing community resources and sharing costs, these summer learning partnerships expanded

learning time by 160-210 hours and engaged scholars in small-group academic instruction and fun, hands-on experiences in the arts, STEM, character development, and fitness. Scholars created their own digital music, created their own business plans, toured colleges and universities, and visited Discovery Place and IMAGINON.

End-of-summer test results showed that participating scholars boosted their percentile rank scores in literacy by 7% and in math by 8%. The BELL Summer program has also been independently proven by the Urban Institute to boost student performance, eliminate summer learning loss, and increase parental engagement.



Summer Learning Program Highlight: FREEDOM SCHOOL PARTNERS

Freedom School Partners is uniting communities across cultural boundaries, giving children an opportunity to envision a successful future and increasing reading ability for children who most need and can least afford an engaging, safe place to spend their summer vacation. Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® lead children through a six-week, literacy-based curriculum that increases the love of reading and builds character strengths. College students serve as Servant Leader Interns, who function both as teachers and role models, while gaining a paid workforce experience. For four consecutive years, independent

evaluation results have shown that over 90% of children have gained or maintained their reading ability after participating in Freedom School. In Charlotte, Freedom Schools are made possible through the support of community partnerships. Faith groups, corporations, foundations and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools work together to provide funding, space and volunteers. This interconnected support, which bridges cultural boundaries, creates a positive learning environment where children feel loved and supported. *For more information, visit www.freedom-schoolpartners.org.*



MENTORING, INTERNSHIPS, AND TUTORING

Mentorships, internships, and tutoring all have in common the pairing of a student with someone who can guide them, direct them, and offer experience in an area in which they are interested or need additional support. Tutoring can be implemented in any ELO format, and tutors can be teachers, volunteers from the community, university students or peers. Mentoring and internships are a deeper step into the realm of expanded learning and offer students the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom and alongside a professional in an area that most often is related to the student’s career interest. Mentoring is most often a one-to-one relationship between a professional or adult in the community and a student. In many cases, mentoring relationships are established for students interested in a particular profession, and are

a way to develop specific occupational competencies in the learner. For communities that are most interested in career or technical education, mentoring programs can be of significant value to students and the community alike. Another type of mentorship is focused on social and emotional health, and is exemplified by programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters and Communities in Schools. In these programs, students who are at-risk or struggling with issues inside or outside of school are partnered with a mentor who can serve as a support to help guide them through their difficult circumstance. Internships, unlike mentorships, can be formatted to count for course credit in North Carolina. Internships allow students a look into the life of a profession and to gain real-world work experience.

Steps for Mentor Planning and Implementation

(North Carolina Department of Public Instruction 2013)

1. Create and/or administer criteria for selection of students (mentees).
2. Determine each student’s (mentee’s) instructional needs, interests, and aptitudes.
3. Create and/or administer criteria for selection of mentors.
4. Approve/select mentor for selected student (mentee).
5. Ensure legal requirements to be met, e.g., liability insurance.
6. Orient mentor to expectations.
7. Orient student (mentee) to expectations.
8. Create a mentoring agreement or affiliation agreement with and between school and carrier agency (business/industry).
9. Finalize each student’s (mentee’s) developmental plan with the student (mentee), parents, and mentor.
10. Supervise on-site mentorships (visit at least weekly).
11. Conduct progress conferences.
12. Evaluate student (mentee).
13. Evaluate process and outcomes.
14. Submit report(s) to school officials and business/industry.



Mentoring Program Highlight:

FUTURE FOR KIDS

Futures for Kids is a non-profit organization working with students, educators, parents and employers across North Carolina to prepare all our students to succeed in 21st Century workplaces. Futures for Kids personalizes the career exploration process for students and streamlines it for educators and administrators, while actively engaging parents and the community in the process. The mission is to help students determine what they want to be, inspire them to what they can be, and work with them to achieve it.

A recent SAS EVAAS study determined students using Futures for Kids outperformed their peers on both End-of-Course (EOC) and End-of-Grade (EOG) tests,

especially in key STEM areas such as mathematics. Additionally, these positive effects increased with the length and depth of exposure to Futures for Kids. Over 500,000 North Carolina students in 75 districts are currently benefitting from Futures for Kids, linking their interests and passions to careers and connecting with mentors and potential employers to create a plan for success. Over 900 volunteer Career Coaches offer guidance, encouragement and a context of real-world relevance to the students.

For more information on Futures for Kids or to get involved, go to www.f4k.org or contact 800-965-8541 / info@f4k.org.



Mentoring Program Highlight:

CITIZEN SCHOOLS

Citizen Schools provides middle school students in low-income communities in eight states academic support and access to hands-on experiences, during a longer school day. These apprenticeships provide students connections to real-world experts through projects that give relevance to their academics and prepare them for future success. Students are able to build relationships with adults in diverse fields and discover how their current schoolwork relates to a future career, with a growing focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) professions.

The apprenticeship model allows individuals from the community, Citizen Teachers, to make a real difference for students for one hour a week, over ten weeks. The volunteers receive support from

AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows during the lessons as well as significant training throughout the experience.

In the apprenticeships, students are able to work on skills like math, science, communications, and writing in a new and engaging way. They might explore the science behind creating a new flavor of ice cream or the marketing and communication skills necessary to launch a brand campaign.

The semester-long apprenticeship culminates in a presentation, called a "WOW!", where students teach back what they have learned to parents, teachers, administrators, and community members.

For more information, visit www.citizenschools.org



Digital Learning Program Highlight:
**NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL
 OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS**

Since 1994, the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics has been a leader in distance education and digital learning.

Interactive Video Conferencing Courses

As part of the school's outreach mission, NCSSM annually offers honors and Advanced Placement interactive videoconferencing courses for 11th and 12th grade students from around the state. These tuition-free distance education courses, which are taught by NCSSM faculty, are designed to provide schools with access to advanced courses which may not be otherwise available. During the 2011-12 school year, 326 students from 33 schools across 22 counties completed a combined 410 credit-bearing IVC courses.

Outreach to K-12 Classrooms Through Interactive Video Conferencing

In addition to courses for credit, NCSSM offers short enrichment sessions via interactive videoconferencing to classrooms around the state. These enrichment sessions, which are often led by NCSSM students and are provided to schools at no cost, are focused on a single science topic and geared towards helping classroom teachers from elementary to high school enhance their instruction. In 2011-12, nearly 1,100 students from 15 counties participated in an IVC enrichment session.

NCSSM Online

In 2008, the school launched NCSSM Online, a virtual learning program designed to provide a "blended" program of online instruction and campus classroom experiences to North Carolina's high-achieving high school students. NCSSM Online students take virtual Advanced Placement and college-level courses in subjects ranging from engineering to multivariable calculus during this two-year program. Students complete tuition-free coursework in addition to or as part of their academic courses at their home high school. In 2011-12, 161 students from 122 schools across 55 counties completed courses through NCSSM Online.

Free Digital Assets for Teachers

NCSSM also provides a range of online digital learning resources for teachers to use in their classroom instruction. These science and math instructional resources include videos, animations, do-it-yourself enrichment sessions, and full math and science lessons.

For more information and to see the resources available, please visit www.dlt.ncssm.edu/stem.

DIGITAL LEARNING

Expanded learning opportunities do not always come in the form of programs as is the case with digital learning. Sometimes simply changing the mode of delivery of education can dramatically expand the way students learn. Digital learning utilizes technology to share a variety of forms of educational material outside of a traditional school, usually through online access. Digital learning usually refers to offering full courses taught online that in some cases culminate in full programs or degrees. There are a number of digital learning options available for students across North Carolina, including the North Carolina Virtual Public School (www.ncvps.org) and courses offered from the North Carolina School of Science

and Mathematics (www.ncssm.edu) and other institutions. Communities have the important role in the realm of digital learning of establishing avenues and providing resources for students to take advantage of these opportunities. Some schools and districts have been able to provide tablets, laptops, and internet connectivity in schools to replace textbooks and allow for students to have constant access to digital learning opportunities. Whether it is through providing technological resources or developing courses and other educational material that can be delivered digitally, offering digital learning drastically expands learning opportunities for students.

STEM

Skills in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are increasingly necessary in this age of information and constantly evolving technology. While schools are the centers for learning the core concepts of these fields, STEM topics are discovery-based in a way that can be greatly enhanced by offering exposure and experience to them in expanded learning settings.

Offering STEM-focused afterschool or summer learning programs provides children an opportunity to engage with the subjects in ways often limited in classrooms. Hands-on science experiments or one-on-one computer time is limited in the classroom, but in focused expanded-learning times, this type of engaged learning can be the norm rather than the exception. In addition to providing additional time to

grasp concepts shared during the school day, quality STEM-focused programs have been shown to boost interest in the subjects and encourage students to pursue STEM-related studies and careers.

Afterschool and summer-school programs are perfect platforms for engaging STEM programs, and resources and opportunities are often widely available. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative, the only federal funding source dedicated exclusively to afterschool and summer learning, is emphasizing STEM as a priority area for grantees. Museums, universities, colleges, and STEM-field businesses are often interested in hosting, supporting, or running STEM summer camps and afterschool programs.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF STATEWIDE AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSING ON ADVANCING STEM LEARNING:

- STEM Learning in Afterschool: An Analysis of Impact and Outcomes." *Afterschool Alliance*. September 2011. Available at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/STEM-Afterschool-Outcomes.pdf>
- Change the Equation www.changetheequation.org has Design Principles for effective STEM philanthropy that draw on research and the collective experience of leaders in corporate philanthropy,
- The STEM Funders Network is a group of funders seeking ways to advance student learning inside and outside the classroom. <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/STEM-Funding-Brief-10182012.pdf>
- The North Carolina SMT Education Center www.ncsmt.org is working on a STEM scorecard to help schools know what STEM schools look like.



STEM Highlight:
BURROUGHS WELLCOME FUND

Monte Evans was a seventh grader who happened to be doing his homework at the local hair salon owned by his mother. Cramped for space, he sat between hairdryers to work on assignments.

At the time, computer scientist Robert Panoff, Ph.D., was laying the groundwork for the Shodor Education Foundation, a Durham, N.C.-based nonprofit organization that seeks to advance science and mathematics education through the use of computational science, modeling and technology, in an office adjacent to the salon.

It wasn't long before Panoff introduced himself to Monte's mother and offered her student-son a space to work in exchange for taking in the mail. Monte jumped at the opportunity.

In 1997, the Burroughs Wellcome Fund provided the foundation with its first Student Science Enrichment Program grant of \$180,000 to run a series of hands-on enrichment summer workshops and Saturday academies for middle school students. Monte Evans enrolled in every class - and soon was helping teach them.

After several years, Dr. Panoff realized that the foundation's primary product was proving to be "not the workshops but the returning students who wanted to be interns and to help teach others."

Shodor now has 12 full-time staffers, 30 computational science interns, and 24 apprentices. Their website, shodor.org, accommodates some 4 million users a month.

Dr. Panoff says that BWF's support remains vital to provide "adventure capital"--seed grants that enable Shodor to launch new and sometimes experimental programs.

Engaging children in science has been a focus of the Burroughs Wellcome Fund since it became an independent, private foundation in 1994. BWF follows the philosophy that all children, regardless of their future career path, need basic science literacy to participate fully in civic life. The best method for achieving the goal of science literacy is to get students involved in doing what comes naturally: asking questions and participating in hands-on activities and experiments that convey basic scientific principles.

The Student Science Enrichment Program provides more than \$3 million annually to support creative science education activities for primary and secondary students in North Carolina.

For more details visit the BWF website at www.bwfund.org



Components of a Quality Pre-Kindergarten Program

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

In the first few years of life, 700 new neural connections are formed in a child's brain every second. This incredibly rapid brain growth occurs through the interaction of the child's genes with his or her environment, and that environment is crucial to the overall development, including the ability to learn, of the child. Barriers or benefits to children's educational achievement start from the beginning, and while some children are born into environments that promote a healthy brain and establish a solid base for ongoing education, some children start down an entirely different path that continues without early intervention. One solid example of the potential disparity based on environment is vocabulary attainment. Differences in the size of children's vocabulary first appear at 18 months of age, based on whether they were born into a family with high education and income or low education and income. By age three, children with college-educated parents or primary caregivers had vocabularies two to three times larger than those whose parents had not completed high school. By the time these children reach

school, they are already behind their peers unless they are engaged in a language-rich environment early in life (Center on the Developing Child 2013).

Education is commonly referred to as "the great equalizer." Formal education, however, is missing during the first period of life in which the largest disparities and inequities occur. The world changes when children enter kindergarten. For most children, it is the first time they are in the same room all day, the first time they are expected to sit quietly in chairs for extended periods of time, and for many children, the first time they are exposed to basic concepts of mathematics and reading. This transition into kindergarten is huge, and the way a child enters the classroom on his or her first day is a heavy indicator of the trajectory of the rest of that child's education. Similarly, children who come to kindergarten knowing the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic must continue to be challenged on their individualized learning progression.

CURRICULUM

Social and emotional development is particularly important for young children, and research promotes the value of skills-based activities with concrete social and emotional goals. Broad curriculum aims in quality Pre-K programs include learning to be confident, learning to play and work with others, learning specific educational objectives that lead into Kindergarten curriculums, and learning values of respect.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of teacher-student interactions, instructional techniques, room environment, materials, parent-teacher relationships, and health and safety are essential for a quality Pre-K program. *The Early Childhood Environmental Scale* is the national assessment used to measure quality in many Pre-K programs.

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Research has shown that involving parents in early childhood education can enhance a child's achievements and adaptation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Studies show that professional development has a positive relationship with teaching abilities and student achievement gains.

GROUP SIZE AND STAFF-CHILD RATIOS

Research has shown that staff-child ratios are generally the most consistent predictor of high-quality learning environments as they increase the number of valuable interactions between teachers and children. Best-practices research suggests there should be two adults for each group of 18 children.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

More highly educated professionals with specialized training in early education are associated with positive child-adult interactions and higher cognitive outcomes for children.

TEACHER COMPENSATION

The National Institute for Early Education Research suggests that Pre-K teacher salaries should be raised to those of comparably qualified K-12 teachers. Setting at least a minimum wage for early education staff increases motivation of current staff, encourages them to stay, and attracts highly motivated and qualified professionals to the sector who otherwise might only enter the K-12 field.

PROGRAM DURATION

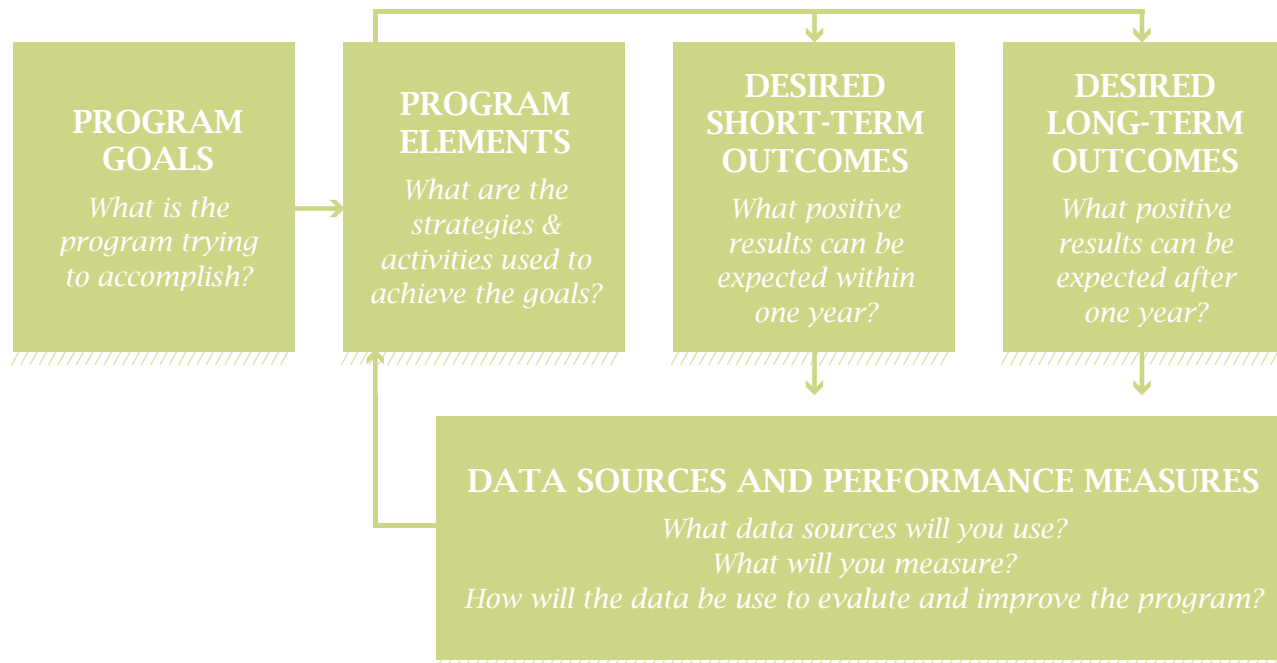
Research shows that longer program-duration times tend to be associated with more benefits, including greater vocabularies, word analysis, math achievement, and better memory. Longer duration programs tend to have more visible long-term impacts and reduced fade-out effects.

IMPLEMENTING ELOs

Once the Council has determined what format of ELOs will be pursued for the community, it is time to set the development process in motion by creating a logic model to guide the work and goals of the program. A logic model is a visual image of what the ELO hopes to accomplish in the community. Taking the step to create a logic model helps keep the goals of the ELO at the forefront of planning and throughout the implementation process. The logic

model will summarize key elements of the ELO, identify rationale behind the elements, articulate short- and long-term outcomes and how they will be measured, and show the expected and desired cause-and-effect relationships between a program and its outcomes. This model will help the Council clearly explain to potential partners or funders what the ELO hopes to achieve and why it is of value.

Possible Logic Model for ELOs



Adapted from Beyond the Bell: Start-Up Guide for Afterschool Programs, 2005, by Learning Points Associates, and from Moving Towards Success: Framework for After-School Programs, 2005, by the C.S. Mott Foundation Committee on After-School Research and Practice. Reprinted with permission.

FINANCING AN ELO

Funding can be one of the biggest hurdles in launching and maintaining high-quality ELOs in your community. NC CAP has developed an overview of the available expanded learning opportunity funding streams in the state. Funding streams come from state agencies and private organizations, and are divided into Academics, Juvenile Justice, Health and Wellness, Needs-Based funding, and Private funding. In addition, Afterschool Alliance has created a new Afterschool STEM Funding Guide available on the NC CAP website. Visit <http://www.nccap.net/starting-an-afterschool-program/funding/> to access the overview.

The Finance Project is a national organization that develops and disseminates research, information, tools, and technical assistance for improved policies, programs, and financing strategies that will support decision-making that produces and sustains good results for children, families, and communities. A number of its publications are excellent resources for ideas on how to finance and sustain ELOs. Visit its website at www.financeproject.org/.

QUALITY MATTERS: EVALUATING AN ELO

Research shows that in order to attain the positive social-emotional and academic outcomes for children and youth, expanded learning opportunities must be of high quality and staffed by qualified professionals (Foundations, Inc. and The Center for Afterschool Excellence 2010). The North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs has developed a toolbox of quality resources for ELOs, including NC CAP's Established Standards of Excellence Self-Assessment Tool: K-12 and NC Afterschool Professional Core Competencies. The Weikart Center's Youth Program Quality Assessment Tools (www.cypq.org/) are also useful. In addition, NC CAP's statewide professional development collaborative developed the state's first online centralized database of ELO training and professional development opportunities. The website is www.ncafterschooltraining.com.

These offerings are the product of two years of work with the Community College System, including focus groups, an online forum with school-age faculty, and extensive surveys of the afterschool field. The certificate feeds into the School-Age Diploma or 2-year School-Age Education Degree. Each of the 58 community college campuses can apply to offer the new School-Age Care Certificate. Contact your local community college's Early Childhood Education or School-Age Education Department for more information.

Through the leadership of NC CAP, in fall 2010 the NC Community College System State Board approved the offering of a new statewide School-Age Care Certificate, developed specifically for before/afterschool program staff, along with new afterschool-specific

A continuous pathway of self-assessment and improvement is critical to ensuring that the program is staying true to the original goals of the ELO stakeholders and that it is aligned with the needs of the community. Because every program is unique, every evaluation process should be uniquely tailored to fit the site. NC CAP has gathered an extensive list of resources to assist the Council in developing a tailored evaluation for the community's ELOs. NC CAP's evaluation resources can be accessed at <http://www.nccap.net/research/evaluation-and-standards/>.



courtesy of Freedom School Partners



courtesy of Futures For Kids



courtesy of Futures For Kids



THE END... BUT ONLY THE BEGINNING

At this point, stakeholders, community leaders, funders, and other advocates of expanding learning opportunities for students are convened and excited to begin the process of developing new opportunities for students to learn. An external analysis of the community has highlighted the needs, resources, and unique offerings of the community. An evaluation of the variety of options in ELO formats has led the Council to a decision on what would best serve the community and its students. The foundation is laid, and now it is time for the development of a high-quality ELO. The steps taken from this point forward will include consideration and action on programmatic processes, staff standards, curriculum, professional development, accountability, licensure, and more. In this Framework we have included several key considerations that will guide you through the beginning phases of the process of developing ELOs. However, every ELO is unique to the community it serves, and this document cannot act as a comprehensive programmatic guide for every community to follow. As aforementioned, NC CAP is a valuable resource for every step of the process.



Quality Program Highlight: MIDDLE SCHOOL SUCCESS

Middle School Success (MSS), an initiative of United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County, works to create success-ready 9th graders. We are part of a community solution to increase high school graduation rates, because we know graduates have more opportunities in Education, Income and Health throughout their lives. As part of our MSS work, we oversee an afterschool program quality network in Buncombe County. With our community partners, we use the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality's Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPOI) to measure program quality and implement a continuous improvement process. YPOI is a three-step process: Assess, Plan, Improve. As part of the YPOI, we use the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPOQA), a research-based,

validated tool, to measure program quality at the point of service between youth-development practitioners and youth. We assess four areas: Safe Environment, Supportive Environment, Interaction and Engagement. Assessments take place internally where staff members and their peers rate each other in accordance with the YPOQA rubric, and externally, where Weikart-trained evaluators observe and score programs. Sites use this data to develop and apply improvement plans. Implementation of this process has led to higher-quality programming, improved instruction and more targeted professional development for staff.

For more information, visit <http://www.unitedwayabc.org/middle-school-success>.



North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs

In 2002, the Public School Forum of NC founded the North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs (NC CAP), a comprehensive statewide afterschool network with key partners including afterschool providers, state agencies, state and local policymakers, law enforcement, business, and the philanthropic community, working together to increase access to high-quality afterschool programs for all children and youth in North Carolina, especially for those at-risk for education failure. Research and anecdotal evidence show that high-quality afterschool programs improve academic performance and school-day attendance, nurture youth development, decrease juvenile crime and other high-risk behaviors, and meet the needs of working families.

As a statewide afterschool network, NC CAP represents over 6,000 afterschool programs serving more than 150,000 children and youth across the state. NC CAP unites a collaborative of over

35 partners to address issues including quality, accessibility and sustainable funding. Among our partners are state agencies, the NC Community College System, public and private funders of afterschool, child advocacy groups, education policy organizations, and others. Our founding partners include the Governor's Office, NC Departments of Public Instruction, Health and Human Services and Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention. NC CAP funders include the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, NC Department of Public Instruction, US Tennis Association, Burroughs Wellcome Fund, NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, A.J. Fletcher Foundation, Duke Energy, Time Warner Cable Connect A Million Minds, Biogen Idec Foundation, The Noyce Foundation, First in America Foundation, and Red Hat.

For more information visit www.nccap.net and www.ncafterschooltraining.com.

policy recommendations

STATE & LOCAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

High-quality Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) complement traditional education by supporting students throughout their K-12 education and ensuring students are college- and career-ready. ELOs not only help students improve their academic performance, but they also improve students' health and their social and economic development, while supporting working families.

Policymakers across the state can move the ELO framework forward on several fronts. First, policymakers can help center education on a new vision that students' well-being requires academic and social stimulation 24/7 and that this task can be accomplished not only with the help of schools but also through the assistance of ELOs and the community.

North Carolina needs an educational system that promotes learning experiences that expand beyond the classroom to include all resources available throughout the community. Learning and development continue when students are outside a school building, so it is imperative that this is reflected in North Carolina's educational system. Policymakers throughout the state need to foster a vision for North Carolina's educational system that comprehends how multiple systems and resource providers can work together to advance student achievement and other student outcomes. ELOs are a crucial part of this comprehensive educational system. Policymakers around the state are encouraged to support the vision of the following policy recommendations.



1

ENSURE ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE ACCESS TO A VARIETY OF QUALITY ELOs.

GOAL: All children will have access to, and be part of, one or more ELOs.

All children can benefit from ELOs and deserve the opportunity to be involved in programs that enrich their education and livelihoods. In North Carolina, there is great inequality in access to the types of programs discussed throughout this document. While some communities in the State offer a variety of summer enrichment programs, afterschool options, digital-learning opportunities, and structured mentoring programs, some communities are unable to offer any of these options to their children. These disparities occur along one or both of the following axes: geography and wealth.

Urban areas tend to have a variety of options and resources available to students. Museums, zoos, and other private or non-profit establishments can support ELOs. Rural communities rarely have the benefits of pre-established "learning zones" like museums or science centers. The variety of professionals available in rural areas is also likely much less than urban areas because rural communities tend to be more specialized in the focus of their economy, making mentoring and internships more difficult to come by.

One of the most consistently reported challenges of rural communities is transportation. Students who rely on school buses to take them to or from school are often excluded entirely from the option of afterschool or before-school opportunities. The burden of transportation is a heavy and costly one that many ELOs are unable to bear. This barrier impedes many ELOs from developing, while preventing access to an entire population of students who might attend such programs if they had a way to get home afterward.

Policymakers can support these needs by emphasizing the importance of community and cultural resources, paired with a transportation system, whether by opening access to school transportation



or cultivating community partners to share transportation resources. The wealth available in a community has a clear connection to the community's ability to offer ELOs. Policy efforts can support low-wealth communities in accessing resources through outside grants or protecting funds that can be used for developing or sustaining ELO programs.

When a community chooses to make an effort to include all children in ELOs, it is critical to collect data regarding who currently benefits from ELO programs and what populations are left out. Public dollars and resources can then be directed to communities or pockets of communities where there is the greatest need or a lack of adequate resources. Students in these populations often stand to gain the most from access to ELOs.

2 SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND ELOs.

GOAL: Through creating more flexibility and breaking down barriers, more partnerships and collaboration will be achieved among school systems, ELOs, and other educational providers.

A comprehensive education system should foster policies that support ELOs and school systems working together in order to achieve successful student outcomes. ELOs enhance learning opportunities by strategically aligning with their respective school systems so that offerings outside of school bolster what students are learning in school. However, collaboration and partnerships among ELOs, school systems, and other education providers is often impeded due to barriers in the current education system. To create more flexibility for successful, student-focused collaboration, policymakers at the state and local level should review existing policies and programs to foster opportunities for school systems and ELOs to align, support, and complement one another. Policymakers should examine interconnectivity between school systems and ELOs through the lens of how ELOs can enhance learning opportunities for students, while being dually supported by school systems that contribute to advancing ELO programs.

School systems can support ELOs through the use of information and resources in order to ensure ELOs have the programmatic needs to sustain their programs and excel in the future. Four key policy areas that policymakers

can examine in order to create more collaboration between schools and ELOs are transportation, joint professional development, building use, and funding. ELO programs often have difficulty in securing funding for their programs, staff development, building space, and transportation for their students. Policymakers can help address the needs of ELO programs by examining policies that would allow school systems to share resources, specifically transportation and

building space, in order to ensure that ELO programs can exist in a community. For example, ELO programs could greatly benefit through a partnership with a church that would lend use of its van for transportation. Policymakers are key players in guaranteeing that legislative and regulatory frameworks and policies do not restrict collaboration opportunities and that active partnering and sharing between schools and ELOs is encouraged.

3

DEVELOP QUALITY DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH TO ALLOW ELOs TO UNDERSTAND THEIR IMPACT ON STUDENTS AND REFINE THEIR PRACTICES TO BETTER SERVE CHILDREN IN A COMMUNITY.

GOAL: Improve data collection and evaluation to measure the impact of ELOs on students.

Evaluation of program effectiveness is essential to the sustainability of any ELO program. Funders and other supporters look for proof that their investment is paying off, and without indicators of what is working and not working in a program it is difficult to make evidence-based improvements. ELOs have a variety of goals and purposes, and in some cases tracking results may be up to the ELO facilitators themselves. STEM-focused ELOs with the goal of increasing interest in STEM fields can conduct pre- and post-program surveys of students to evaluate interest and follow up years later to ask about college attainment and career choices.

Many ELOs are focused on more immediate, direct improvements in a child's educational experience: improved test scores, better classroom behavior, increased graduation rates, or improved school attendance. Tracking this information has historically been a difficult feat, with limited capabilities on the sides of the ELOs and the school system. A number of barriers have impeded ELO access to student-level data like test scores and graduation.

Exciting new developments in the field of data collection and accountability are creating new opportunities for the ELO and school communities. The NC Department of Public Instruction, in collaboration with several vendors, has created a new shared-technology platform that offers a wealth of student data and resources to foster collaboration across school systems and community partners. This platform, Home Base, is the statewide, instructional improvement (IIS) and student information system (SIS) for teachers, students, parents

and administrators. The platform is expected to begin phasing into schools in the Fall of 2013.

Teachers will use Home Base to access student data and teaching and learning resources. Students will have access to their schoolwork, grades, and learning activities. Parents will be able to view their child's attendance and progress, and administrators can monitor data on students, teachers and schools. Home Base will replace NC Wise and other data management systems that are not able to keep pace with the State's growing technology needs in schools. Home Base is designed to allow easy, quick access to data and resources for everyone involved in schools with a single sign-on. The system is made up of the following components:

- Learner Profile and Student Information
- Standards & Curriculum
- Instructional Design
- Practice & Resources
- Assessment
- Data Analysis and Reporting
- Professional Development & Educator Evaluation

If anything will allow for greater tracking and evaluation of ELOs and student outcomes, it is Home Base. The platform is intentionally designed to allow different stakeholder groups (teachers, students, parents, principals, etc.) to sign on and access a differentiated set of resources and data. In the final development and ongoing improvement of the Home Base system, a sign-on could be developed



for ELO facilitators. ELOs could then report student involvement in their program and subsequently track student indicators. The facilitator could designate a student as a participant of the program and maintain contact with parents and teachers about learning styles, specific student needs, etc. Home Base also tracks important student-safety information (i.e., individuals who are not allowed to pick up the child) and student-health information. This data is shared through the single portal of Home Base with teachers already, and

could greatly contribute to student safety and wellness if shared with ELO facilitators. Ensuring ELO access to Home Base could allow for improved, comprehensive tracking and insight into the value of expanded learning opportunities for students. Policies that fund and support infrastructure for the gathering of data are crucial. Many measures, including several types of school-level data, are available to community partners already; however, additional data is needed for ELOs to successfully support student achievement.

4

ELOs SHOULD BE ADVOCATED FOR, SUPPORTED, AND MONITORED BY A SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SYSTEM ELO COORDINATOR

GOAL: Hire a School/System ELO Coordinator to direct and improve the ELOs in the community and to address the policy guidelines in this document.

If funding can be made available, recruiting a School/Community System ELO Coordinator can be a great place to start, particularly if the goal of the Council is to further develop already-existing ELOs or if the group is intending to implement several new ELOs in a community. An ELO Coordinator is the leader for the ELOs in a school or school system and surrounding community. This person acts as a liaison between the school, parents, and larger community, acquires and allocates resources needed for a given ELO,

and develops and maintains the quality of the ELOs he or she oversees. This person will be responsible for maintaining records and data for continual evaluation of program effectiveness. The tasks of this position could feasibly be adopted by an existing school administrator, but a full-time position would allow for a growing and thriving ELO environment in a community. Page 39 shows an example job description for an Expanded Learning Coordinator (ELC):

5

NORTH CAROLINA AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES NEED TO ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ELO PROGRAMS.

GOAL: North Carolina and local communities need to ensure sustainability of ELO programs even in the absence of ongoing public funding.

Policymakers should be champions of sustaining effective ELOs even with the absence of ongoing public funding for the programs. Over the past five years, the state has lost key ELO funding streams, in addition to cuts at the local level. While public funding should never be the only funding source for ELOs, policymakers can assist through several avenues to ensure ELO programs exist even with the absence of public monies.

funding streams so that ELOs can share or access facilities, equipment, or personnel from other public systems and programs. Also, policymakers can create policies that will assist ELO programs with creating effective strategies. These policies can lead to sustainability, including evaluating outcomes and demonstrating effectiveness, building broad-based community support, using funds strategically, and ensuring efficiencies through effective management (Bowles and Brand 2009).

Policymakers can break down barriers to create coordination and collaboration between various

Expanded Learning Coordinator POSSIBLE JOB ROLES

LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Meet regularly with the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Participate in ELO policy and practice updating
- Sustain and oversee resources for ELOs
- Write grants to support the development of ELO opportunities for LHS students
- Meet with the principal to discuss educators' compensation for participation as ELO teacher
- Present teacher with ELO agreement prior to the start of ELO process
- Communicate proactively with all stakeholders
- Attend ELO conferences at the state level

LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

- Liaison to faculty, administration, guidance department, community partners, students
- Community liaison - letting the community know about ELOs
- Distribute, approve, and coordinate all aspects of ELO program for a student and his/her teacher or community partners
- Connect with parents to discuss student progress on a frequent basis
- Present at Open House Nights on ELOs
- Media Liaison- providing PR about the school in regards to ELOs

ELO DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Establish and maintain a rigorous, relevant, and personalized ELO process, protocols, and tools
- Promote the ELO initiative in the building and in the community
- Advocate for ELO participants
- Publicize and promote new and completed ELOs
- Present on ELO status at faculty meetings
- Market to civic groups, businesses, and community organizations
- Be an ambassador for the benefit of ELOs for students, school, and community and develop student ambassadors for ELOs

DEVELOPMENT OF ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT MODERATION OF ELOS

- Establish evaluation team for each ELO
- Consult for formative and summative assessments
- Assure application of ELO protocols and tools for assessment
- Conduct periodic check for validity and reliability of assessment protocols, tools, and application

MAINTENANCE OF RIGOR OF THE SCHOOL'S/DISTRICT'S ELO INITIATIVE

- Be up-to-date on Best-Practices research
- Assess existing and potential community partner sites for approval

MAINTAIN RECORDS AND DATA

- Manage all ELO records- ensure that all partners in ELOs complete and receive appropriate info and documents
- Maintain ELO records- plan, agreements, safety documents, contact information, assessments, student documentation, training materials, etc.
- Follow all laws and regulations that govern education and safety checks
- Collect and maintain data on each ELO and all ELOs in a manner that can result in school-level and state-level records (EIS/SIS)
- Produce reports as needed for administrators
- Provide information for reports on the state level

(Beyond the Classroom 2013)

conclusion

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN IS CONSTANTLY EXPANDING.

In closing, it is imperative to consider that **EDUCATION** is **24/7** when developing policies and programs serving children and youth across North Carolina. We cannot expect students to be career and college ready and globally competitive by only educating our students during traditional school hours. The time and experience beyond the traditional school day is vital to the development of every child. We have the opportunity to expand learning and enhance the well-being of every student in North Carolina through Expanded Learning Opportunities.

We cannot expect our schools to be the sole providers of a child's education; it takes community initiatives and ELOs to complete a child's educational experience. State and community leaders are encouraged to utilize this framework and recommendations therein to develop ELOs in every county across the State. Policymakers are crucial to the development of these ELOs and should create policies that support a vision for more ELOs in North Carolina.

*Because our students need EDUCATION 24/7,
now MORE THAN EVER.*

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