

## 1. NEEDS STATEMENT

### A. Assessment Process (Partner, Community, Schools)

During the recent recession, Forbes Magazine published a list of the top 10 most vulnerable towns in America.

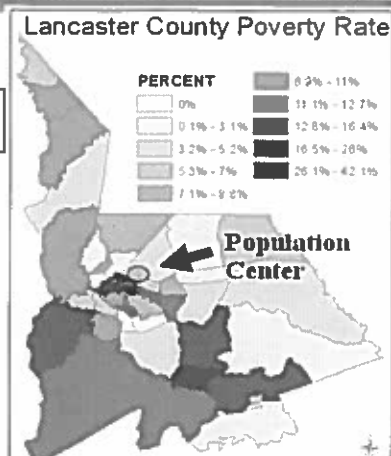
Lancaster, South Carolina topped the list. Forbes cited unemployment twice the U.S. average, double the poverty rate, and 30% of adults with no high school diploma. Sadly, this is not the first time

Lancaster received negative national attention. In October, an FBI Uniform Crime Report listed Lancaster as the second most dangerous city in the state. Community leaders were shocked to learn that the top areas were located in the rural upstate, as opposed to urban centers. Although some associate drug use, violence, or gang affiliation with large urban centers, the rate of these problems in many rural towns often exceeds larger cities or boroughs. Such is the case in Lancaster.

The proposed project is the work of the Coalition for Healthy Youth, a partnership of over forty public, private, civic and faith-based entities came together in 1998 to address community problems such as violence, substance abuse, and crime. They include:

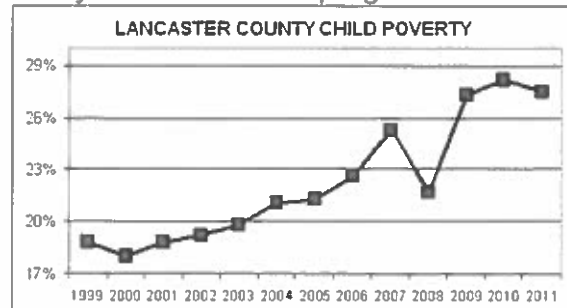
Lancaster School District	PCASA (Victim Services)	NAACP
Counseling Services of Lancaster	Health Department	Juvenile Drug Court
Catawba Health Department	Catawba Mental Health	Children's Council
Univ. of SC-Lancaster	Hope Center Church	Christian Services
Lancaster Sheriff's Department	Fatherhood Project	Learn TV
Department of Juvenile Justice	Hope on the Hill	First Steps

The work of this coalition has been staggering and begins with a rigorous community assessment, updated annually. Over 40,000 surveys have been distributed to students, teachers, and administrators, along with a household survey mailed to 20,000 homes, physicians, churches, and businesses. County forums have also been conducted with



over 3,500 attendees and an archival data warehouse established with 100 datasets on education, health, and crime. The Coalition has also raised \$20 million dollars in funding for prevention programming, sponsors an annual national conference on evidence-based prevention, and produces a monthly cable television program.

Since their formation in 1998, the Coalition has struggled with the growing poverty rate, including a staggering 41% of all homes that are headed by single women, which are four times more likely to be poor than a home with both parents. The impact of poverty is also evidenced in homes lacking basic amenities. The 2010 census indicates 13% of families with no transportation, 12% lacking a phone, and 2% without indoor plumbing.



#### **B. Needs Assessment Process & Findings (Students and Families Served)**

The proposed plan focuses on students and families served by an elementary school with some of the greatest needs in the county. The aforementioned network of community stakeholders serving on the Coalition helped guide development of the program. The theoretical framework underlying this work has been the Risk Focused Prevention Model (Hawkins & Catalano, 1990), which articulates nineteen risk factors associated with problem youth behaviors such as dropout and substance abuse. Based on a 150 page community assessment report derived from archival data, surveys, and community forums, two risk factors were employed to shape the afterschool project:

- **RISK FACTOR 1: Academic Failure Beginning in Elementary School**

Educational problems in Lancaster begin to appear in late elementary grades with the school targeted for the proposed program lagging behind others in the district. With over

half of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, Buford Elementary School houses

some of the poorest students and consistently scores below district average of state

achievement tests. Last year,

	Students	F/R Lunch	White	African American	Hispanic
Buford	792	52%	88%	8%	4%

over a fourth Buford students

failed to meet standard in science and over

20% fell below in Math. Unfortunately,

student retention is almost triple the state

average, increasing 62% in the past year.

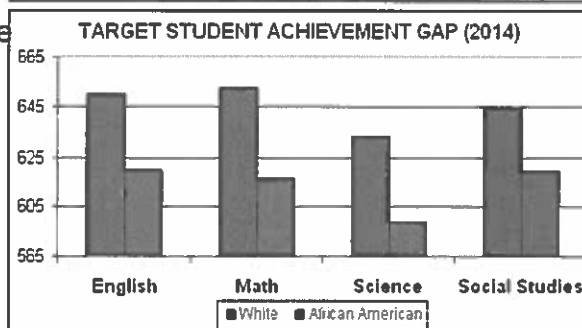
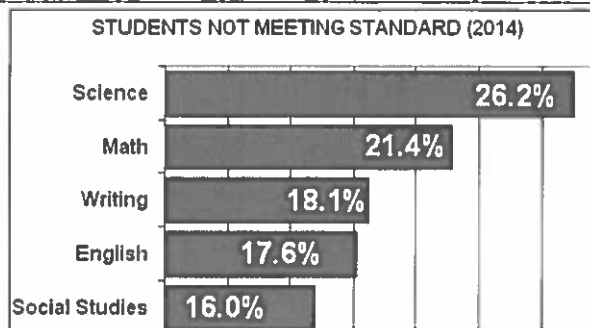
Historically, students retained one grade are

50% more likely to not finish school, and

those retained two grades are 85% less

likely to graduate. Likewise, the number of

students older than usual for grade level is



double the state average, up 16% from 2013. Unfortunately, the chart above depicts a significant minority achievement gap with regards to average PASS scores.

• **RISK FACTOR 2: Family Management and Support Capacity**

The second risk factor (Family Management & Support) is a special concern for working families. There are only 19 licensed childcare

centers available, with a capacity of 1,898 children,

	LANCASTER
Childcare Centers	19
Available Spaces	1,885
Child : Space Ratio	1 to 0.38

or 10 children for every slot. Since only 32% of these centers accept TANF vouchers

for low-income families, poor children are left with no afterschool childcare. In addition,

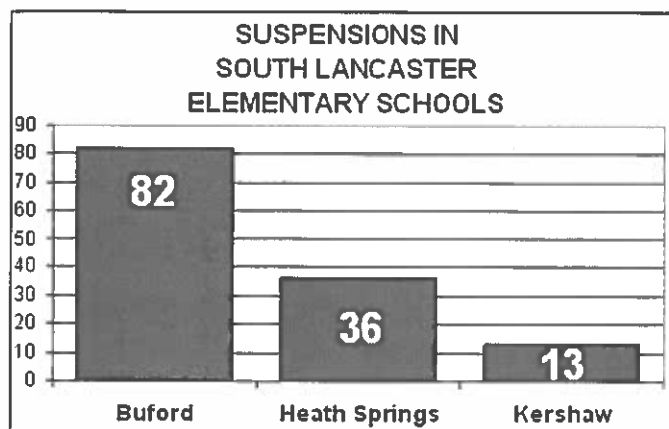
30% of adults in Lancaster do not have a high school diploma, which often diminishes

their capacity to support their child's education in the home. School leaders decry the

repeated number of calls to parents related to misbehavior, tardiness or detentions.

Last year, Buford logged the highest number of school suspensions of any elementary in the southern region of the county.

Although drugs and weapons violations are more widely



observed in secondary schools, both problems were reported last year at the elementary level. Based on this data, the proposed after school program has been designed to target student performance in core subjects (English Language Arts, Reading, and Math), improve attendance, classroom performance, and disciplinary referrals, and include a strong parent involvement component to better equip parents to support their child's education, with an emphasis on adult literacy

#### **C. Current Program Available**

No other after school programs at either target site.

#### **D. Recompeting Application –**

The proposed project is not recompeting. No 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant has ever been applied for, or funded at the site.

**PROJECT DESIGN**

**A. Performance Goals and Objectives (Measures)**

The goals and objectives of the program flow logically from the needs assessment data and are consonant with the focus outlined in the RFP. All intervention strategies are aligned with this data and drive the overall data collection protocol and evaluation:



Interventions outlined in the next section have been designed to impact participant knowledge, attitude and behavior, and are consonant with the aforementioned Risk Focused Prevention model, and include all five required goals:

- Students Participating In The Program Will Meet Or Exceed State And Local Academic Achievement Standards In English Language Arts, Reading And Math.
- Students Participating In The Program Will Show Improvement In School Attendance, Classroom Performance, And Reduced Disciplinary Referrals.
- Students Regularly Participating In The Program Will Demonstrate Additional Positive Social And Behavioral Changes.
- Families Of Students Regularly Participating In The Program Will Be Afforded Opportunities For Family Literacy Activities And Services.
- Subgrantees Will Have A Strategy In Place To Support Program Sustainability.

The table below summarizes each objective and measurement protocol to be employed:

	OBJECTIVES	MEASURE
ACHIEVEMENT	50% of program participants will increase math grades by a half letter grade or five-percentage points from the first marking period to the last period of each academic year.	PowerSchool data review of grades in math.
	45% of program participants will improve math performance on state standardized assessment from prior to current year.	PASS (or state equivalent) in math
	50% of program participants will increase their ELA/Reading grade by a half letter grade or five-percentage points from the first marking period	PowerSchool data review of grades in ELA/Reading
	45% of program participants will improve their reading performance level on the state standardized assessment from the prior year to the current year.	PASS scores (or state equivalent) in Reading.

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	
92% of regular program participants will show improvement in school attendance by reducing their number of days absent from the prior academic year compared to each successive year of operation.	PowerSchool database queries conducted quarterly, compared with baseline.
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	
80% of regular program participants will show improvement in their school behavior by reducing their number of discipline incidents from the prior year to the current year.	PowerSchool queries conducted quarterly, compared with baseline
<b>STUDENT PERFORMANCE</b>	
92% of program participants will show improvement in classroom performance, including homework completion and class participation, from the first marking period to the last marking period, each academic year as reported by teachers.	Outcome surveys conducted of classroom teachers at end of each academic year.
<b>FAMILY MANAGEMENT SKILLS / FAMILY LITERACY</b>	
Parent participants in Effective Black Parenting / Confident Parenting / Los Ninos Bien Educados training component will evidence a 15% increase in family management skills as measured by the Family Environment Scale, each cycle	FES collected prior to first session; posttest at end of cycle.
Parent participants will evidence a 25% increase in school involvement (Epstein Parent Involvement Scale)	PIS Collected at intake; posttest at end of cycle.
36% of ASE Low enrollees in the adult education component will acquire the basic skills needed to complete the level.	TABE test, at pre-test and every six months.
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	
A combination of resources (financial, human, & in-kind) will be secured to maintain the program once funding has lapsed.	Annual Budget Report, resource allocation log

## **B. Description of Activities and Strategies**

### **1. Description of Specific Activities for Students to be Undertaken**

A rigorous instructional program is proposed that includes a strong partnership with community organizations as well as services to strengthen families and promote parent literacy, and which emphasize identified areas of concern (reading, science and math). The district recognizes that most children are unable to maintain interest throughout the school day and then SIT for hours in an after-school program. A program has therefore been developed that engages children in learning activities aligned to the instructional

curriculum, but exercised in more creative ways, building on individual learning styles.

This component employs the award winning Accelerated Reader, Reflex Math, and ClassWorks, appropriate for students at differing levels of need and language (NCRE,

2001), comprised of two academic blocks

and one enrichment. To maximize

individual attention, class size will be

limited to 10. Although the curriculum

employs a computer-facilitated model, only

TIME	INSTRUCTIONAL DOMAIN
2:00-2:30	Snacks / Read to Self, Bathroom
2:30-3:45	Tutoring Homework Assistance
3:45-4:30	Technology Reflex Math / Classworks Accelerated Reader
4:30-5:00	Enrichment /Physical Activity
5:00	Load Buses

40% of time is spent at computer, with remainder in lecture, discussion, and games.

The program, to be operated five days a week for three hours each, for 30 weeks, will be taught by certified teachers along with volunteers recruited by partner organizations. In this way, experienced teachers can be paired with committed individuals from the community thus increasing opportunities for positive role modeling.

Finally, because of limited resources, the program will target those students at the greatest need, with recommendations from principals, teachers, and parents.

Approximately 50 children will be served at each site throughout the year.

## **2. Academic & Enrichment Activities Based on Principles of Effectiveness**

During development of the proposed project, an extensive review of literature was conducted with regards to afterschool programming, youth development and parent engagement. All program components have been aligned with the research base, with careful attention to ensure that strategies are appropriate for the developmental, gender and cultural composition of the target population. For example, keeping the class size limited is strongly supported within the literature (Bagby, 2000; NCRE, 2001; Nadel,

2002). Likewise, limiting instruction to only 40% computer base is consistent with research on the effective use of computer-facilitated learning (Gootman, 2001). The use of assessment to drive instruction is also a best practice for afterschool programs (Bagby, 2000), as is varying the menu of enrichment courses (NCRE, 2001).

Prior to instruction, each student will participate in an assessment of language and math skills to determine which Study Island unit they will receive. All components include modules for ESL students. Furthermore, the curriculum has been aligned with state curriculum standards to ensure coordination with regular school instruction.

### **C. Student and Family Support**

#### **1. Additional Social or Behavioral Services Provided To Support Student Success**

Consonant with best practice literature related to afterschool programming, a range of enrichment and physical activity services will be provided to facilitate student engagement and social interaction, as well as provide additional opportunities to support instruction. To help stimulate interest, the enrichment component will employ a varying menu of special topics, revised monthly. Although specific activities will be selected, based in part on student, teacher, and partner interest, the following exemplifies the range of services that are likely to be provided:

Healthy Bodies	Tap Dancing	Mnemonics (memory skills)	Spanish
Gardening	Tie Dye T-Shirts	Music Video Production	Photography
Cartooning	Stepping	Roller Coaster Physics	Ceramics
Kitchen Science	Creative Writing	Science Fair Preparation	Fitness Fun

#### **2. Description of Snacks/Meals Served Daily, Preparation, and Source of Funds**

An attempt has been made to integrate program elements into a unified system's approach. For this reason, the provision of snacks is linked to other program elements. For example, snacks will include instruction on basic nutrition. Likewise, the role of food



in different cultures will be explored with sample snacks from Mexico, Italy, Spain, Africa, and other areas. All snacks will be coordinated by the district foodservice department according state guidelines, paid through USDA reimbursement.

### **3. Description of Activities Provided To Address Literacy And Related Needs**

The earliest and most enduring influence on the child is the family. Studies have revealed a number of risk factors associated with failure to thrive academically including family conflict, domestic violence, low family cohesion, poor child supervision and discipline practices. However, criticisms of traditional parent education models have highlighted their failure to address the unique needs of minority families, especially African American parents (Alvey, 1998). In response to these criticisms, several parent training models have been incorporated into the afterschool design. They include:

**Los Ninos Bien Educados** – a 10-session skills training program designed to promote effective family management, especially those with limited English language skills.

**Effective Black Parenting** – a 10-session model named one of 25 Top Family-Strengthening Programs by the National Child-Care Information Center. The program spotlights African culture as the cornerstone of civilization.

**Confident Parenting** – a 10-week parent program that has been especially effective with non-minority families in rural communities.

One cycle of each curriculum will be offered to participants each year. It is also important to note that the costs of these services will be supported through other grants, with 21<sup>st</sup> Century funds focused solely on direct academic and enrichment instruction. Also, because each of these models is recommended by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the project will serve as a more comprehensive prevention project.

In addition to the parent training, another component of the proposed program involves an agreement with the Adult Education Program provide Basic Adult Education, GED preparation, ESL instruction, and TABE testing, to parents of children enrolled in the program. The agency operates a mobile lab with 8 computer stations to help provide instruction to parents. Adult Ed has agreed to place the three target schools on their route and provide services on site to parents of children in the program.

Each of these interventions shares a common structure involving recruitment strategies with a demonstrated capacity to support parent involvement. Strategies include provision of on-site childcare, transportation, a family style meal at each session, home visits to explain the program, and basket of door prizes comprised of items to enrich parent child interactions. In addition, over the past five years, more than 1,500 home visits have also been conducted to solicit parent involvement and input.

#### **D. Evaluation Strategies**

A same subject, repeated measures design will be used to examine program effectiveness. A dependent T-Test, employing an alpha level of .05 will be employed to examine differences over time between pre and posttest measures. Data will be collected by teachers and evaluator (Office of Research) at beginning of academic year and at each semester. The following measures will be included:

<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>
Achievement	PASS scores Math, English, Science, Reading
Attendance	Average Daily Attendance (PowerSchool)
Behavior	Student Disciplinary Reports (PowerSchool)
Parent Management	Family Environment Scale; Epstein Parent Involvement Scale
Family Literacy	Test of Basic Education (TABE)

In addition to the outcome data that serves as the chief framework of the evaluation, the implementation process will be monitored with attention given to the

following process benchmark measures: 1) the planned program of services; 2) number of activities completed; 3) number of students and parents involved; and 4) logistics of program services. Quality issues will be addressed through participant satisfaction measures. Both outcome and process data will be reviewed to ensure fidelity with the program model. Key performance feedback issues will include:

1. Are project tasks completed according to the implementation timeline?
2. Are intervention strategies implemented with fidelity to the individual models?
3. Would additional resources increase the overall impact of program operation?
4. How closely did implementation match the plan?
5. What types of changes were made to the originally proposed targets?
6. Are additional recruitment strategies required?

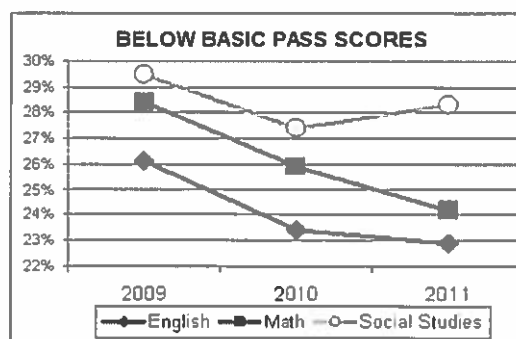
The review of process and outcome data, along with the discussion on feedback issues will enable program staff to track overall impact and fidelity with the program models. In cases where significant progress has been delayed, corrective action plans will be devised and submitted to project leaders.

## MANAGEMENT

### A. Project Will Be Implemented Efficiently

#### • Evidence of Successful Experience

The proposed project is based on a design, which in 2000 was named Outstanding Program of the Year by the South Carolina Association for Rural Education. Although additional work is needed at the target schools, the positive achievements have been evidenced over the last three years. The chart above indicates students scoring Below Basic on PASS have



dramatically declined. Likewise, in-school suspensions dropped 200% and unexcused absences fallen 13%. Also, 130 parents have participated in parenting classes. Data reveal statistically significant improvement on the Family Environment Scale, outlined in the table to the right.

T-Test: Paired Two Means		
	<i>Pre-test</i>	<i>Post</i>
Mean	13.2977	20.70
Variance	13.0414	21.34
Correlation	0.568	
df	130	
t Stat	-21.577	
P(T<=t)	<b>4.28E-45</b>	
t Critical	1.65665	

The management unit for the program will be the District Office of Research, headed by Dr. Paul N. McKenzie, who has served as a consultant to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program at the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, for six years the office has operated homework centers in middle and high schools, serving over 350 students. As such, the district has extensive experience in program development, client tracking, evaluation, and reporting.

- **Clearly Defined Job Descriptions and Qualifications of Key Staff**

The proposed program will be staffed by a Program Director (full time position) with over twelve years experience in the management of afterschool programming. She will be responsible for regular monitoring of each site, fiscal oversight, report submission, liaison with the state department and participation in all required meetings. In addition, the school will have a site coordinator (Vacant, part time) to assist with scheduling, data collection, transportation, communication with parents, and reporting.

- **Plans and Budget for Ongoing Staff Training and Professional Development**

A comprehensive staff development component has been designed with both formal and informal (in-service) opportunities. All project staff will participate, with courses offered throughout the school year and annual summer institute. The core topics are designed for two intensive 3-hour workshops, focused on program policies, procedures,

documentation, role of culture and gender, and classroom management. In addition to this baseline training, all instructors in the proposed program will participate in a full day workshop detailing the use of the curricula (Accelerated Reader, Reflex Math).

- **Development and Active Collaboration / Members of Advisory Council**

As indicated earlier, the proposed project was developed with the assistance of the Coalition for Healthy Youth, a network of over 40 public, private, civic, and faith based entities, who will



also serve as the advisory council. The Coalition is one of the most active, prolific, and diverse organizations in the state, with membership that includes:

Lancaster School District	PCASA (Victim Services)	NAACP
Counseling Services of Lancaster	Health Department	Juvenile Drug Court
Catawba Health Department	Catawba Mental Health	Children's Council
Univ. of SC-Lancaster	Christian Services	Hope Center Church
Lancaster Sheriff's Department	Fatherhood Project	Learn TV
Department of Juvenile Justice	Hope on the Hill	First Steps

The group meets monthly, with subcommittees meeting on a varying schedule.

The group sponsors an annual national prevention conference, monthly broadcast on a Cable access station, and a wide range of social media venues. In addition, they review program status for every coalition sponsored endeavor, including the afterschool program. The Program Director for the afterschool program also serves as a member of the Coalition, which meets monthly at the University of South Carolina- Lancaster.

During the development of the proposed program, several of these partners were selected for more personal involvement. These organizations and their roles include:

**Partners for Youth (PFY)**

Partners for Youth is a private education foundation developed to raise funding for schools in Lancaster County. In addition to teacher mini-grants, and scholarships to

graduating seniors interested in pursuing a teaching career, the foundation has agreed to provide financial support to offset the decreased funds in years three and four.

#### **Lancaster County Adult Education Program**

The Lancaster County Adult Education has committed to set up satellite offices in each of the target schools, and provide a wide range of support services to families of children enrolled in the afterschool program.

- **Plan to Coordinate Federal, State, and Local Programs**

The proposed project will be fully integrated and coordinated with all existing local, state and Federal program resources. For example, an Optical Mark Reader and survey software purchased with Federal funds will be employed during the evaluation of the afterschool program. Title I funds will be employed to facilitate parent components and the Adult Literacy services will access both state and foundation funding. No supplantation will occur.

#### **B. Strategies To Be Used To Disseminate Information About The 21st CCLC**

- **Dissemination of Program Information / Public Notification and Review**

Community awareness has been a crucial component of the design. First, presentations by students will be made at PTA meetings and school events. Second, the district operates a private cable TV access station and will produce a 30-minute program to highlight the afterschool program and participants. In addition, these venues were used to make public notification of application, and protocol for public review and comment.

**ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABILITY****A. Describe The Adequacy Of Resources****1. Staffing of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC to Ensure Participant/Teacher Ratios**

The proposed project will be staffed with certified teachers from the target school, aides and volunteers recruited with the assistance of the Coalition. As indicated earlier, class size will be limited to a 10:1 student – teacher ratio. The aforementioned Site Coordinator will assist with scheduling, bus transportation, data collection, and monitoring each classroom for compliance with the overall management plan.

**2. Site to be Used**

The proposed program will have complete and full access to classrooms, media center, computer lab, cafeteria, gymnasium, playground, and storage. Each classroom has an average of 1,200 square feet and outfitted as any normal elementary school class. Each site also complies with local, state and federal requirements related to safety, sanitation, fire codes, food inspection, Americans with Disabilities Act, and client records.

**B. Detailed Transportation Plan**

In addition to providing a safe environment with adequate programmatic resources, feedback from parent surveys suggests that transportation to afterschool services represents a significant obstacle for many. To that end, transportation will be provided to any child requiring assistance. Grant funds will be employed to enable district buses to pick up and transport children at the end of the program day. Since the identity of the specific children who will participate in the program is not known until recruitment begins, it is impossible to determine the exact number of buses, routes,

drop-off location, and arrival times. Past experience has shown that a bus leaves each site at 5:15, with approximately 65% of children requiring transportation, with an average ride of less than 20 minutes. As is the case in any grant program, increases in any line item (e.g., fuel costs) are the responsibility of the fiscal agent (school district) to maintain compliance with the contractual agreement.

### **C. Plan For Sustainability**

#### **1. Description and Explanation of Sustainability Objective**

As required in the RFP, a sustainability objective has been devised and listed below: A combination of resources (financial, human, in-kind) will be secured to maintain & continue the program once grant funding has lapsed. The objective includes securing resources to cover the costs of decreased funding in years subsequent years as well as support to continue the program once grant funds have lapsed.

#### **2. Funding Plan**

Since the inception of the Coalition, five program initiatives have been implemented. To date, all are still in operation despite a lapse in the original funding source. The sustainability strategy involves sharing resources to reduce program costs, reliance on volunteers, fund development targeting one of five local private foundations, aggressive federal grant development with over \$20 million dollars in Coalition funding received to date, and rigorous evaluation to justify funding from local donors.

The following steps will be taken to secure sustainability funding:

1. Conduct a quarterly local, state and federal funding scan, for potential resources.
2. Invite leaders from the three local private foundations to tour the afterschool program at the end of the first year of program operation.



3. Submit a letter of inquiry to each foundation to determine potential funding interest.
4. Ensure that all relevant federal grant proposals submitted on behalf of the district that can be employed to support afterschool services include potential funding.
5. Compile evaluation data on effectiveness of the project to support future funding.

**3. How Costs Covered in Years Three and Four**

As indicated earlier, a local foundation (Partners for Youth) has committed to providing funds to offset budget reductions in years three and four.