

# EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT



*Success in the classroom can depend on factors beyond the school day. With a safe place to go after school, children can explore their talents in constructive activities, while tutoring can smooth the way for students traveling a bumpy road to academic achievement.*

## Educational Enrichment in Pennsylvania

The reality of the times: Nationwide in 1998, both parents or the custodial single parent of 5.3 million low-income children, ages 6 to 12, worked during the after-school hours.<sup>1</sup> Many low-income children are at risk of failing, and where they spend their time out of school can make a difference in the school, in higher achievement and better behavior. In Pennsylvania, three formal educational enrichment programs – youth development, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, and Classroom Plus – are designed to provide academic or developmental boosts, while subsidized child care can offer parents safe out-of-school options for their children up to age 12. All, however, fall short of the need in most communities.

### **After School/Youth Development**

Introduced in 2001-02, Pennsylvania's youth development program operates through local and regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), the economic development panels within the state Department of Labor and Industry's Team Pennsylvania effort. The program serves 9,409 low- and

moderate-income 5- to 18-year-olds, including a small percentage – 3.3 percent, or 311 children – from 5 to 8 years old. The WIBs work with local youth-serving organizations to establish programs in community places such as child care programs, children and youth agencies, and schools.

Operation by the WIBs gives the programs a job-training character while remaining focused on their primary purpose – giving disadvantaged children and youths enriching after-school activities, including tutoring, homework help, remedial schooling, job training, and recreation. Because the program is in its first year, its effectiveness for the 5-to-8 age group has not been determined.

Of the \$15 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding allocated for youth development, \$10 million goes to all WIBs through a formula based on local rates of TANF-eligible families. Another \$5 million is awarded in challenge grants to WIBs serving families up to 35 percent of poverty.



## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

The core mission of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers is improving academic achievement, but the school-based centers can strive for their goals through a variety of activities – drug- and violence-prevention programs; technology education; art, music and recreation programs; counseling; and character education. Nearly every program offers reading enrichment, and most also offer tutoring, homework help, and math enrichment. Targeted at schools where students face multiple risk factors, including poverty, limited English proficiency, high dropout rates, and low literacy, the program served about 5,000 Pennsylvania children, ages 5 to 18, in 2001.<sup>3</sup>

When first created in 1998, the federal government administered all the funds allocated for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs. However, since passage of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in January 2002, some of the program's \$1 billion will funnel through states. In Pennsylvania, the 35 programs previously funded with \$15.15 million will remain under U.S. Department of Education oversight, but the state

will now control, develop standards for, and distribute an additional \$11.5 million for new programs.

The No Child Left Behind Act further emphasized the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC's mission of academic performance improvements, but the revision also extended funding to non-school groups, including faith-based organizations.

## Classroom Plus

Introduced in 2001-02, Classroom Plus is designed to help students overcome academic challenges by the middle of their elementary years and achieve grade-level reading standards. Third and fourth graders who score in the bottom quartile on recognized achievement tests are eligible, while fifth and sixth graders qualify by scoring below basic proficiencies on Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests. Eligible students must be enrolled in public, private, or nonpublic schools.

With a \$23.6 million allocation, the Pennsylvania Department of Education issued 1,500 grants in 2001-02. For their academically eligible children, parents of any income can use grants of up to \$500

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## After School/Youth Development

- **Definition:** Local after-school educational and job training programs for children ages 5 to 18.
- **Eligibility:** Funds are distributed through a formula based on percentage of area residents eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or through challenge grants available to programs serving families up to 235 percent of poverty (\$42,535 for a family of four).
- **Participation:** Of the 9,409 children served statewide in 2001-02, 311 children were ages 5 to 8.<sup>2</sup>
- **Availability:** Offered by 23 regional Workforce Investment Boards and their Youth Councils, in 67 counties in 2001-02.
- **Oversight:** Team Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.
- **Funding:** \$15 million through the state Department of Public Welfare in 2001-02, with \$10 million allocated by formula and \$5 million awarded in competitive challenge grants.
- **More information:** Team Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board, [www.paworkforce.state.pa.us](http://www.paworkforce.state.pa.us); 717-772-4966.

to buy individual or small-group tutoring from any Department of Education-authorized provider. Statewide, most Classroom Plus tutoring programs are offered by school districts and intermediate units, but other options are available, including for-profit tutoring centers or programs run by non-profit or private schools, faith organizations, and other community groups. Individual reading and math teachers can also receive approval, and English as a Second Language is available in many areas. Services can be provided before or after school, on weekends, or in the summer, although the \$500 ceiling can limit services to an initial assessment and about 10 hours of tutoring, especially at for-profit centers.

## Why Educational Enrichment Matters

In an atmosphere where many young schoolchildren are not building elemental reading skills – 23 percent of Pennsylvania fifth graders scored below basic proficiency on the 2001-02 PSSA test – after-school programs and carefully structured tutoring can bridge the gap.

For young children, structured after-school programs can promote school achievement. In Milwaukee, for example,

## The Child Care Factor

More than half of the 95,992 children in Pennsylvania's subsidized child care program – 53,755 children – are school age, between 5 and 12 years old.

Of these, about 31,000 are in state-licensed center-based or group home child care settings, which must provide “homework supervision... in accordance with arrangements determined by the parent and the operator” but are not required to provide educational programming. The rest are in family child care homes or watched by neighbors and relatives, where formal education may or may not be a part of the day.

A national study found that 6- to 9-year-olds in child care or attending an after-school program are there for an average of 13 hours a week – an opportunity for learning.<sup>5</sup> When those hours are in a high-quality program, the benefits surface in children who get better grades and have better social adjustment and conduct in school than their peers who aren't in after-school programs.<sup>6</sup> (See “Child Care”).



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## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

- **Definition:** After-school and summer programs providing academic enrichment for children in schools with students facing multiple risks of educational failure.
- **Eligibility:** Schools that provide after-school, evening, and weekend learning opportunities, designed to meet the needs of local children and in collaboration with community-based organizations, including faith-based groups. New federal rules will extend eligibility to community-based organizations without school involvement.
- **Participation:** About 5,000 Pennsylvania students, ages 5 to 18, participated in 2001.
- **Availability:** Offered at 35 sites operated by school districts, intermediate units, and charter schools, in collaboration with community-based organizations. Growth in federal funding will expand the program in 2002.
- **Oversight:** U.S. Department of Education, distributing funds to the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- **Funding:** \$15.15 million in federal funds in 2001, distributed in minimum \$50,000, three- to five-year competitive grants.
- **More information:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, [www.ed.gov/21stcccl/](http://www.ed.gov/21stcccl/).

216 low-income third graders in an after-school program showed better grades, improved study habits, and fewer behavioral problems than their peers who didn't attend. In another study, 150 low-income first graders got better grades and developed improved work habits after attending an after-school program.<sup>7</sup>

Researchers agree that success in tutoring hinges on the presence of key factors that assure quality and yield a return on the investment. They include:<sup>8</sup>

- Close coordination with the classroom or reading teacher.
- Intensive and ongoing training for tutors.
- Well-structured and carefully scripted tutoring sessions.
- Careful monitoring and reinforcement of progress.
- Frequent and regular tutoring sessions. The more sessions each week, the greater the gains.

Young children who get tutoring benefit from improved classroom performance:<sup>9</sup>

- **Language enhancement:** In one study, low-achieving second- and third-graders tutored twice a week for an hour outperformed their non-tutored peers in word recognition, reading accuracy, and spelling. Half of the tutored children

made a full year's gain in reading, compared to only 20 percent of the comparison group.

- **Social gains:** Low-achieving elementary school students tutored by older students in one program had lower absentee rates and fewer disciplinary problems, as well as improved reading scores. As a bonus, their tutors also had lower dropout and absentee rates.
- **Confidence booster:** Students who are tutored in reading have shown higher self-confidence as readers and are more motivated to read.

## State of the States/Best Practices

### Youth Development

According to the National Governors Association, state efforts to implement successful extended learning opportunities, such as youth development, tutoring programs, and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs, are most effective when they:<sup>10</sup>

- Build infrastructure that supports collaboration and coordination.
- Complement, rather than duplicate, regular instruction.

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### Classroom Plus

- **Definition:** State grants for parents to buy math or reading tutoring services for their children.
- **Eligibility:** Children in third through sixth grades in public, private, or nonpublic schools who fall below established standards on achievement tests.
- **Participation:** 1,500 grants were issued in 2001-02.
- **Availability:** Individual or small-group tutoring services at approved for-profit or non-profit programs during non-school hours and the summer.
- **Oversight:** Bureau of Community and Student Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education.<sup>4</sup>
- **Funding:** \$23.6 million in state funds in 2001-02, with grants of up to \$500 per child.
- **More information:** The Classroom Plus hotline, 1-800-219-9740, or [www.essp.org](http://www.essp.org).

- Include evaluations of programs and initiatives.
- Recruit and retain highly qualified staff.

The NGA reported that 26 other states fund youth development after-school and summer programs, with investments averaging around \$20 million. Among them:

- Illinois is targeting \$8.5 million to Summer Bridge, a literacy program that includes after-school opportunities for 19,000 selected students, ages 6 to 18, from the lowest-performing schools in the state.
- New York invests \$10 million in after-school programs for 6- to 18-year-olds.
- California provides \$117.5 million for after-school programs, to improve student academic performance and to offer students a safe and enriching environment. Schools partner with city, county, and community organizations to provide before- and after-school programs to students in kindergarten through ninth grade.
- Washington, D.C., is using \$20 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funding to expand its Afterschool for All program from 70 schools to all 140 of them. The program offers free after-school activities to all public school students.

## Tutoring

Many tutoring programs for young children focus on literacy, ingrain the key to learning before the opportunity is lost (see “Reading Readiness and Success”). Exemplary tutoring programs for young children include:

- Jumpstart, founded in 1993 by two students at Yale University to engage young people in community service and promote the literacy development of low-income children in child care and Head Start. Operating in New Haven, New Jersey, Boston, New York City, and Washington, D.C., Jumpstart trains and supports college students to work one-on-one with young children and their families. More than half of the college students receive work-study wages. With part-time services in the school year and full-time services in the summer, Jumpstart provides child care for participating families.
- University programs that take comprehensive, community-based approaches.
  - In partnership with Philadelphia Reads, 60 University of Pennsylvania students tutored 250 children in schools



and community centers, and among the results, a group of low-achieving second graders jumped more than two grade levels in reading ability.

- Miami-Dade Community College led a local consortium that sent tutors to inner-city schools, while a Washington State University-led consortium sent tutors to work with rural migrant children.
- New York University’s 700 work-study students tutored more than 5,000 urban school children and saw reading scores rise in one year.
- At the University of Maryland at Baltimore, work-study students contributed to a comprehensive after-school intervention and to an intensive summer reading camp for third and fourth graders.

## Situation Analysis

Pennsylvania’s approach to after-school issues has been fragmentary. Before 2001-02, some funds were allocated for education mentoring and Communities That Care, the local resource assessment and violence-prevention program. In the late 1990s, support began building among local officials, law enforcement professionals, families, and lawmakers, visible in unanimous state House votes for youth development legislation. The movement resulted in the new, \$15 million allocation devoted specifically to after-school programs, which was followed by \$23.6 million for Classroom Plus, the tutoring grants for students who are falling behind academically.

But the state’s investment still does not meet a much greater need. In Pennsylvania, the parents of 1.2 million school

## POLICY DIRECTIONS

In Pennsylvania, the parents of 1.2 million schoolchildren are working, setting the stage for many latchkey afternoons. However, the situation opens the door of opportunity for learning enrichment. To address gaps in educational out-of-school services, the state should:

■ **Coordinate programs:** The state should take advantage of its new control of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers by better coordinating existing after-school and youth development programs, such as the Workforce Investment Board's youth development programs and Pennsylvania's subsidized child care program. The effort should also include evaluation of the effectiveness of after-school programs in reaching and meeting the needs of elementary-school-age children.

■ **Build capacity:** With a state investment significantly higher than current allocations, the youth development initiative could support a range of additional after-school and youth development programs, from homework assistance and extra learning opportunities, to mentoring and programs that build skills for the workforce, to tutoring arrangements in child care centers. New programs should be accessible to urban and rural students as well as suburban, and should be judged by strong performance standards to ensure their effectiveness.

■ **Evaluate Classroom Plus:** An evaluation would determine Classroom Plus' effectiveness in improving academic performance. The state should also determine the impact of making high-quality tutoring more affordable and accessible for low-income children.

■ **Enhance child care quality:** The state should continue quality improvement efforts to enhance the educational content of child care, subsidized or not. Incentive programs such as Keystone Stars (see "Child Care") can improve educational activities and teacher credentials in after-school child care.

■ **Provide information:** The state Departments of Education, Labor and Industry, and Public Welfare should compile information on available programs in regional or county resource guides and Web sites, giving parents, educators, child care providers, human service professionals, faith leaders, and community officials a central source for available educational enrichment programs. The state should also consider public outreach campaigns to inform parents about the availability of educational enrichment opportunities.

children are working. A nationwide survey found that 5 percent of 6- to 9-year-olds are usually unsupervised while their parents work, and overall, 10 percent regularly spend time by themselves. Families of school-age children often need reliable after-school care because in most American households – among 69 percent of married couples, 71 percent of custodial mothers, and 85 percent of custodial fathers – parents work outside the home. The result can be a 20- to 25-hour weekly gap between parents' work schedules and children's school time.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 cemented the relationship between after-school programs and academic achievement, transferring control of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers to states. Although it opened eligibility for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grants to non-school organizations, including faith-based groups, the act re-emphasized the centrality of academic improvement, continuing to target children at risk of failing in school. The transfer of control, says the National Governors Association, offers states an opportunity "to promote a cohesive agenda" by coordinating the programs that NGA calls "extra learning opportunities."

Like the youth development allocation, Classroom Plus tutoring grants, designed to bring children up to third- and fifth-grade reading standards, extend limited services to a limited audience. A typical session at a for-profit tutoring center costs about \$30 to \$40 an hour, plus \$175 for a basic reading assessment, while non-profit programs usually charge about \$20 to \$30 an hour. Families could stretch the grant by utilizing a low-cost, non-profit tutor – at least one is available in most counties (exceptions are the rural Juniata, Pike, Sullivan, and Wyoming counties, but providers may be within commuting distance in neighboring counties). However, for families who find that a for-profit center best fits their child's and family's needs, a \$500 grant couldn't buy the continuous and frequent sessions needed for tutoring success.

Advocates for tutoring and after-school programming include parents, law enforcement officials, teachers, faith-based organizations, family center programs, and child welfare agencies – citizens who see opportunities to enhance learning in the after-school hours, but whose communities may lack good programs.

# ENDNOTES

## Educational Enrichment

- <sup>1</sup> Long, S., and Clark, S., *The new child care block grant: State funding choices and their implications*. Urban Institute, December 1998.
- <sup>2</sup> Team PA, March 2002.
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Education, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, [www.ed.gov/21stcccl/](http://www.ed.gov/21stcccl/).
- <sup>4</sup> PL 107-110. No Child Left Behind Act. 2002. [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).
- <sup>5</sup> Urban Institute and Child Trends, *Child Care Patterns of School-Age Children with Employed Mothers*, September 2000.
- <sup>6</sup> Center for Research on Women, National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Wellesley College, March 2001.
- <sup>7</sup> Vardell, D., and Shumow, L. *The Future of Children, When School Is Out, "After School Child Care Programs,"* The Packard Foundation, Fall 1999.
- <sup>8</sup> Evidence That Tutoring Works, Office of the Under Secretary, Planning and Evaluation Service, U.S. Department of Education, 1997, [www.ed.gov/america/reads/resourcekit/miscdocs/tutorwork.html](http://www.ed.gov/america/reads/resourcekit/miscdocs/tutorwork.html).
- <sup>9</sup> The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, *The Future of Children: When School is Out*, Fall 1999.
- <sup>10</sup> National Governors Association, *Extended Learning Opportunities Briefing Paper*, March 2002.



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### Mission Statement

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children is a strong, effective and trusted voice for improving the health, early education and well-being of the Commonwealth's children.

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