

Guidebook For Planning Your Innovation Project

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Guidebook for Planning Your Innovation Project

In 2004, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Washington Afterschool Network led by School's Out Washington, spent seven months gathering input from parents, young people, school staff, afterschool providers, policymakers, businesses, and community leaders to determine what Washington needs to build sustainable afterschool programs. Four key areas were identified through this extensive work:

- (1) Expanding or creating additional afterschool programs to serve more children and youth;
- (2) Providing professional development and training opportunities for afterschool providers to ensure high quality programs;
- (3) Supporting statewide intermediary organizations to ensure afterschool programs have access to resources, research, training opportunities, etc.; and
- (4) Increasing public awareness about the benefits of afterschool programs for young people, families, and the community at large.

The purpose of the Innovation Project is to address the 4th area of building public will. The information gathered from the statewide plan shed light on the lack of public awareness around the important role of afterschool programs and how that creates a barrier to service delivery. When the public does not understand the value of afterschool programs, young people are not enrolled in existing programs and new programs become a lower funding priority.

This is the third year that School's Out Washington is awarding Innovation Project Mini-Grants of up to \$2,000 for coalitions, organizations, groups or other collaborative entities to implement a project focusing specifically on building public will for afterschool among a target audience. For the past two years, funded projects have focused on raising awareness among school principals with a goal of building strong partnerships between schools and afterschool programs. In 2009, we expanded the reach of this project by targeting not only school principals but also community leaders including local law enforcement, municipal leaders such as mayors, city or county council members, and/or other local government officials.

To support the Innovation Project sites in organizing an engaging and successful event, we have compiled various tools and resources in this guidebook. In addition to the resources in this guidebook, we encourage Innovation Project sites to contact School's Out Washington as needed for additional resources or to consult on specific parts of the project. The contents of this guidebook may be edited and altered to fit the various communities and events being planned. These resources and tools are only meant as a suggested approach. Incorporating the contents of this guidebook into the Innovation Project is **not** a requirement of the grant.

The first section of the guidebook includes sample tools for planning an event. While organizing an event is not the only way to build public will, we have provided tools based on an event for the purposes of this guidebook. The samples provided are from events organized by School's Out Washington.

The second section includes sample tools and ideas for conducting follow-up with participants who attend the event. A key piece of the Innovation Project lies in building relationships and securing commitments from participants for future actions to follow-up from what is learned at the event. As Innovation Project sites enter into a more detailed planning process, we encourage thinking through a follow-up plan that strives to continue engaging community leaders in developing and/or strengthening the partnerships with afterschool programs and acting on interests and commitments made at the event. The intent of this funding opportunity is to build public will among community leaders for afterschool and create a web of support for local collaborative efforts to work together on sustaining programs.

The third section includes information to work with the media. We encourage programs to contact their local newspaper or radio station to share information about the event being organized. Included in this section are various templates that may be personalized to fit the specifics of the local event. We also have a list at School's Out Washington of local media contacts around the state and are available to provide technical assistance in working with the media.

The fourth section of the guidebook provides resources on the important role and benefits of providing young people with out-of-school time enrichment opportunities. Research shows that some critical components of a quality afterschool program include enriching opportunities that complement the school day, links between school-day and afterschool staff, and shared vision between the school and afterschool program of the benefits extended learning time provides. The success of these important components is dependent upon principals who are aware of the benefits of partnering with afterschool programs. Existing research is a compelling and critical tool to share with principals to clarify their role in supporting learning outside the classroom.

Lastly, the fifth section includes a curriculum developed by the National Association of Elementary School Principals on strengthening school/afterschool partnerships. This curricula builds on the work from their publication, *Leading After-School Learning Communities*, and includes sample activities and additional resources to think about in planning the Innovation Project event.

I. Sample Tools for Planning Your Event

This section will provide you with samples of the following to reference or edit as you plan your community event.

- Letter of Invitation
- Agenda
- Speaking Points for Keynote or Panel Members
- Evaluation

These are provided as a resource or starting point. Each event should be tailored to meet participant and community needs.

We encourage you to think about planning your event around already scheduled natural gatherings of community leaders. For example, for the past two years, School's Out Washington has held our statewide Innovation event at Principals' conferences. In 2007, the National Association of Elementary School Principal's conference took place in Seattle. We held a luncheon after the conference workshop on partnering with afterschool programs where we had an opportunity to talk more in depth with educators about how to best support students. Last year, we had a booth at the Washington State Principal's Association annual conference where we sponsored an evening event and had the opportunity to provide resources and converse with principals from across the state about how to create and expand afterschool programs in their school community. Considering what time and day works best for your target audience is important to facilitate higher attendance rates at your event.

Letter of Invitation

One of the most important parts of planning an event targeting extremely busy educators and community leaders is to ensure a connection is made to the relevancy of the content with their work. An effective way to do that is by having the letter of invitation to the event come from a peer, such as a principal, superintendent, local police chief or other leader on board with the importance of afterschool programming. We have found that members of certain constituencies are more likely to attend an event if they see that their peers are involved in the planning. Highlighting in the letter the benefits of participation or how attending can help them with a particular challenge is another successful approach. This spring, OSPI will have federal funds available through the 21st Century Community Learning Center competitive grant process. Since funding is a primary challenge, a focus on this potential funding stream may be one strategy to persuade principals and other community leaders to attend. The last section of this guidebook has great research and resources with facts about how afterschool programs support student success, decrease risky behaviors and support healthy behaviors along with other important benefits to children and youth. Including a few key facts in your letter helps

build the case for why attending an event to discuss the benefits of supporting afterschool programs is worthwhile.

Below are two sample letters we used in planning our two sector events. Both were sent from Gary Kipp, the Executive Director of the Washington Association of School Principals who serves on the Washington Afterschool Network's Panel of 50 advisory committee. These events were specifically targeting principals as the primary audience. Including afterschool champions who either work as educators or in another leadership role in the planning and outreach process for your event will help ensure a higher attendance rate among the targeted constituency at your event. (Please note that all samples in this guidebook are also available at our website and on the enclosed disk.)

Sample Letter of Invitation #1

Dear _____:

I am honored to have the opportunity to invite you to a special event for key leaders and administrators of education in King County that will take place on May 2, 2006, at the Washington Mutual Leadership Center at Cedarbrook

By attending this event, you will learn about new research that has emerged to show that students who participate in high-quality afterschool programs are more engaged in learning and achieve higher academic performance. You will also learn how you can leverage the value that afterschool programs add to your school district in order to address challenges such as improving student success and achievement, building more public support for your schools, and increasing school safety.

Details of the event:

- Date: Tuesday, May 2, 2006
- Time: 7:30am-11:00am (event will include a delicious, hot buffet breakfast that will be served at 7:30am)
- Location: Washington Mutual Leadership Center @ Cedarbrook
18525 36th Avenue South
SeaTac, WA 98188
- Event details: Keynote speaker, panel, and discussion addressing the value of successful afterschool programming in your school district

Highlights of the event include a keynote address from Terry Peterson, Director of the Afterschool and Community Learning National Resource Network. Peterson has advised the National Elementary School Principals Association. He also sits on the National School Boards Association Extended Learning Committee and was a featured speaker at their national Council of Urban School Boards meeting. Peterson was the author of the lead article in the May 2005 issue of *The School Administrator*, which focused on afterschool hours.

The event will also feature a panel of speakers from schools and programs throughout Washington State. Panelists will highlight success stories about how afterschool programs have benefited schools by increasing academic achievement, family engagement, and connections to businesses and communities. Following the panel, you will have the opportunity to engage in a discussion with other program participants. This discussion will help you to formulate ideas about how you can build a model of successful afterschool programming into the overall goals and vision of your school district. You will also be given a wealth of materials and toolkits at the event that will help you to take immediate action for increasing the effectiveness of afterschool programming in your school district.

In order to make this program effective, I would like you to bring a team of 2-3 colleagues from your school district. The team members that you bring should be key stakeholders that will be involved in the planning and implementation of successful afterschool programming in your school district. Examples of team members that you might want to consider bringing include: a school principal, a PTA president and/or member, a parent, an afterschool or 21st Century program director.

Please RSVP for this event by Wednesday, April 26th to Lauren Rachal at lrachal@schoolsoutwashington.org or 206-323-2396.. When you RSVP, please provide the names of the 2-3 other team members that you will be bringing to the event.

Sample Letter of Invitation #2

Dear _____:

I am excited to learn that you will be attending the National Association of Elementary School Principals annual conference this year in Seattle. This 5-day convention and exposition presents a great opportunity for Washington State principals to learn about innovative approaches to education. As we try to meet the many demands placed on us as school leaders, reaching out to community partners becomes a critical piece of our work. As you plan your daily schedule, I encourage you to consider attending some events focused specifically on fostering these community relationships and partnering with after-school programs.

The morning of April 2nd, there will be a workshop entitled *Leading After-School Learning Communities* focusing on how schools can partner with after-school programs to build bridges and help students achieve school success. The workshop is designed to engage principals in discussions to provide a deeper understanding of opportunities that are possible when collaborating with after-school providers. In March 2006, NAESP released *Leading After-School Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do*, a publication that calls on principals to be strong advocates for after-school programs and to work closely with after-school directors to achieve their mutual goals for children. Workshop participants will be given a

complimentary copy of this publication to further these goals in your communities. **There are limited spaces available for this workshop, so please reserve your space as soon as possible.**

Following this workshop, you are invited to a special luncheon for Washington State principals hosted by School's Out Washington and the Washington Afterschool Network. In addition to a delicious lunch, you will be provided with an opportunity to talk with your colleagues in Washington State about strategies to effectively partner with after-school programs and come away with some concrete ideas to bring back to your school community. There are a limited number of slots available for this special luncheon, so please RSVP to Danielle Baer at School's Out Washington by Monday, March 19th at 1-888-419-9300 or dbaer@schoolsoutwashington.org.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions and I hope to see you at these special events as we work to create a seamless learning day for children and youth in our state.

Agenda for Event

The following samples come from two different types of events; the first a more informal luncheon with a loose agenda and the second a more detailed agenda for a full morning meeting. Each event includes a keynote, time for small group discussions, and most importantly food. Bringing in a keynote who is knowledgeable about the challenges principals face and who can speak to the importance of afterschool programs from a principal's perspective is an important element to solicit interest and participation in your event. Allowing participants time to network and share ideas amongst themselves is also important as this is often the time that ideas take shape to bring back to one's own network or community. It is also helpful to provide a more in depth agenda for those with an active role in the event that includes a detailed timeline and explanation of activities.

Sample Agenda #1

Agenda for April 2nd NAESP Luncheon

Building Partnerships with After-School Programs

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 12:15 | Opening remarks from Terry Barber with the Washington Elementary School Principals Association |
| 12:30 | Terry Peterson, University of South Carolina –
Community & Afterschool Network
Setting the stage for Building Partnerships
with After-school Programs |

12:40	10-minute video on linking school and afterschool programs
12:50	Table conversations exploring questions around how to build strong partnerships with after-school programs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is your current after-school program linked to your school day system? Or, if you do not have an after-school program, how do you think an after-school program could support you school day system? • What resource might be most beneficial to help support and/or start an after-school program? What barriers are currently preventing you from having an after-school program? • What are some next steps that you and your colleagues could take to promote greater connections between after-school and school day systems? • What is one idea or tool that you can take back to your school and after-school program and how might you implement or act on this idea or tool?
1:20	Complete commitment sheets and follow-up activities

Sample Agenda #2

Leveraging the Value of Afterschool Programs to Increase Student Achievement	
<i>Funding for this event was generously provided by SOAR – Helping Kids Reach for the Sky</i>	
I.	7:30-8:00 a.m. Breakfast
II.	8:00-8:10 a.m. Introduction & Program Overview – Jonelle Adams, Executive Director of Washington Alliance for Better Schools
III.	8:10-8:20 a.m. Connecting Afterschool Programs to Businesses– Joyce Walters, Early Learning and K-12 Community Investment Manager
IV.	8:25-9:00 a.m. Keynote Address, “Leveraging the Value of Afterschool Programs to Increase Student Achievement”, Terry Peterson, Director of the Afterschool and Community Learning National Resource Network
V.	9:00-9:45 a.m. Panel of Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion Evanson, <i>Success through Leadership in Afterschool</i>, Nooksack Elementary School Principal • Marcie Belfield, <i>Improving Academic Achievement through Afterschool</i>., Daffodil Elementary School Principal • Greta Salmi, <i>Increasing Family Engagement through Afterschool</i>, White Center Heights Elementary School Principal

- | | |
|-------|---|
| VI. | 9:45-10:15 a.m. Q & A Session for Panelists |
| VII. | 10:15-10:45 a.m. Table Conversations |
| VIII. | 10:45-11:00 a.m. Wrap-Up – Jonelle Adams |

Speaking Points for Keynote and/or Panel Members

Personal stories and anecdotal information on experiences with afterschool programs is a critical component to a speaker's message. However, it is helpful to also provide speakers with points that highlight research or current events related to out-of-school time. The following is a bulleted list of some key points highlighting the benefits of afterschool programs and recent developments in the field. You may want to pull out some of these points or create your own that are specific to what is happening in your community to give your speakers a general sense of some key areas you want addressed at the event. You will also find several more resources in the last section of this guidebook that provide you with more content specific research and data to support the benefits of afterschool programs.

- Underscore already existing partnerships that made the event happen, especially between schools and afterschool programs. Afterschool programs provide invaluable links between parents, schools, and communities.
- Afterschool programs provide experiential learning opportunities that support the learning happening for young people during the school day. In addition to academic support, they also provide a safe place for children and youth to go during out-of-school time and provide recreational, youth development, and cultural activities.
- Children and youth only spend 20% of their waking hours in school and how they spend the remaining 80% has profound implications on their well-being and future. Afterschool programs provide positive experiences for school-aged children and are also effective in preventing school drop-out, helping kids achieve school success, and supporting working families who experience considerable stress when their children are out of school and unsupervised.
- Especially during these tough economic times, we must think about children and families who are struggling to make ends meet. Families need the supports of afterschool programs as many parents find themselves working longer hours or juggling several jobs to make ends meet. Providing a safety net is key to maintaining healthy communities where young people continue to thrive. Young people attending afterschool programs do better in school, are more likely to graduate and explore pathways to new careers. Afterschool programs are an essential resource that help keep young people safe, inspire them to learn and support working families.


- Quality afterschool programs provide services that fit a variety of parent schedules and seek input from parents (and youth) when developing curricula and outcome measures. Parents who have little contact with schools due to schedule, transportation, and/or cultural barriers may have more contact with afterschool programs, allowing them to serve as a link between schools and parents.
- Many afterschool programs provide support for core academic subjects and help kids develop skills essential for the 21st Century workplace such as creative thinking, problem solving, teamwork, value for diversity, leadership, and use of technology. When children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs, they have increased opportunities to succeed academically, are better prepared to enter college, and have more to contribute to the workforce and growth of Washington's economy.
- As a school leader, it is important to have a shared vision for how the needs of afterschool programming in your school will be met. This vision is important for garnering needed program support and should be one that everybody- parents, instructional staff, support staff, and the community- can easily identify with. The vision should be simple (i.e. an expanded-day program that would support daily classroom lessons, reinforce skills, expand the vocabulary of our ELL students, offer enrichment opportunities, and involve the community.)
- As a school leader, it is important to invest in staff development for afterschool program staff. Providing staff development is critical to the success of any afterschool program as research shows that the number one indicator of a high-quality program is well-trained staff.
- Several studies on afterschool programs show that students who participate in these programs are more engaged in learning and achieve higher academic performance. Students have shown improvements in standardized test performance, homework completion, and grades. Participation in afterschool programs has also been linked to reductions in grade retention.
- Afterschool is an issue supported by people across all political party lines. Based on polling data collected by the Afterschool Alliance after the November 2008 election, three in four voters (76 percent) say newly elected officials in Congress, as well as new state and local leaders, should increase funding for afterschool programs. Fewer than one in five voters disagree that this funding should be increased.
- School's Out Washington completed a Supply & Demand Study of Afterschool and Youth Development Programs in Washington State. The study found that only 22% of children ages 5-12 and 6% of 13-18 year olds currently participate in one of the 9,000 programs identified statewide.
- Nationally, the percentage of youth who participate in programs drops in middle school from 66% to 15% with more than 1/3 of early adolescents unsupervised afterschool demonstrating that a gap exists in programming for this age group.

Evaluation


The Innovation Project grant application requires an evaluation component. While each proposal included their own evaluation plan, we have provided here a sample evaluation tool that may be useful in finalizing your own.

Leveraging the Value of After-School Programs to Increase Student Achievement Evaluation Form


1. Please rate the overall usefulness of this event (please circle your response):


Very Useful 1 2 3 4 Not At All Useful

2. *Prior to this event*, how informed did you feel about the role of after-school programs in supporting educational outcomes (please circle your response)?


Very Informed 1 2 3 4 Not At All Informed


3. *After today's event*, how informed do you feel about the role of after-school programs in supporting educational outcomes (please circle your response)?


Very Informed 1 2 3 4 Not At All Informed


4. After today's discussion, do you feel more supportive or less supportive of the need to leverage the value of after-school programs in your school district or community in order to help increase student achievement?

More Supportive **Less Supportive**


5. Please rate the "Leveraging the Value of After-School Programs to Increase Student Achievement" presentation (please circle your response):


Excellent 1 2 3 4 Poor

6. Please rate the local panel discussion (please circle your response):


Excellent 1 2 3 4 Poor

7. Please rate the small group exercise (please circle your response):


Excellent 1 2 3 4 Poor

8. What would have made the event better for you?

II. Follow-Up Activities to Sustain School/Afterschool Partnerships

We hope that after your event, participants will feel like they have a clearer understanding of how critical afterschool programs can be in building and supporting healthy communities and positive educational outcomes. We also hope that educators and community leaders attending your event will take the information they learn and use it to become champions of afterschool in local and state policy discussions and in strategizing around how to support academic success and social and emotional well-being of the young people in your community.

We have provided below two tools to help you in planning the follow-up part of your event. One tool is a follow-up activities form with suggested ideas of what event participants can do to stay engaged and the second tool is a commitment form. The samples we use here are geared towards state-level activities and not the local-level engagement, but they can be altered or provide you with some ideas as you plan your event. We hope that these events will encourage educators to support school-based program and and promote open communication and coordinated work among classroom teachers, afterschool programs, parents and community resources. We hope that municipal leaders, local law enforcement, business and other local leaders will engage in discussions around creating a local coalition or collaborative effort to explore ways to finance and sustain afterschool programs in the community.

As you create a follow-up plan, one easy way to engage leaders in awareness around what is happening in the afterschool community in Washington state is by encouraging them to sign-up for the Washington Afterschool Network Children's Action Network email alerts run by the Children's Alliance. Through this email alert system, people stay up to date on policy activities at the local, state, and federal level. To learn more about the Washington Afterschool Network and to sign-up for the email alerts online, visit the School's Out website at: <http://www.schoolsoutwashington.org>. If participants at your event are interested in being more involved with the Washington Afterschool Network and would like to receive notices on our quarterly meetings and more detailed updates, they can contact Janet Frieling at 206-323-2396.

Tool #1: Follow-Up Activities Form

Building Partnerships with After-School Programs

Follow-Up Activities

Leveraging the value of after-school programs to increase student achievement requires a strong, cohesive system of after-school programs. We need your help to create a more cohesive system of after-school programs in Washington State. This form lists a variety of ways in which you can get involved in this work. Please fill it out and leave it on your table. We will get in touch with you to follow up.

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Phone _____ **Fax** _____

E-mail _____

I am interested in (please check all that apply):

- Joining the Washington Afterschool Network's Children's Action Alert, which will give you brief background information on after-school issues and the action that is needed and who to contact. To join the email alert system, visit the following website: <http://www.childrenshub.org/calliance/home.html>
- Participating in Washington Afterschool Network's Partnership Group Meetings, which are held quarterly.
- Help organize or attend a local Lights On Afterschool! Event, which is part of a nationwide rally to create awareness for the need to support after-school programs.
- Joining an informational email group to receive the latest news and updates about after-school programming in Washington.

Tool #2: Commitment Form

Building Partnerships with After-School Programs

Commitment Form

Using the information that you learned today, what is one thing that you will commit to doing to support efforts in your community or school district to build and/or partner with high-quality after-school programming that supports educational outcomes?

What kinds of additional resources or support from the Washington Afterschool Network do you need in order to help you meet your commitment?

Please sign below. Thank you.

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

III. Bringing in the Media

While the intent of the Innovation Project is to raise awareness among community leaders of the important role afterschool programs play in their communities, organizing a community event presents an opportunity to engage your local media as well. We encourage you to incorporate in your planning process contacting local newspapers and/or radio stations. School's Out Washington is available to help you identify media outlets in your area as well as provide any technical assistance around working with media or publicizing your event broadly.

Provided below are a few tools for engaging local media. These resources are from the Afterschool Alliance, a national organization that advocates for afterschool programs. More information about working with the media can be found on their website at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

Media Advisories or Media Alerts

Media advisories or alerts are one-page announcements of upcoming events. They are designed not for the public, but for journalists. Their purpose is to inform reporters of upcoming events, and convince them that these events are genuine news stories worthy of coverage. Usually, you would want to send an alert one week prior to the event. Some tips for putting together a media alert:

- Advisories or alerts can be written in narrative or bulleted form, answering the questions: What, When, Where, Who and Why. Regardless of the format, an advisory must announce an upcoming event. Using the bulleted format that reporters can easily browse for the key pieces of information are usually more effective.
- An advisory should say when an event is, where it is, what and whom reporters will find there.
- At the top of your advisory include the date and the name and phone number of someone the media can contact to follow up.
- The more “newsworthy” the media, the more likely a reporter will come. For example, highlighting who your keynote is or something about the event that makes it unique in your community will more likely attract the media.

Sample Media Alert:

MEDIA ALERT

October 17, 2008

Contact: Danielle Baer, School's Out Washington

206- 336-6924

206- 351-6141 (cell)

Preparing Today's Learners for a 21st Century Workplace

Cutting-edge conference highlights the importance of afterschool programs and partnerships with schools and communities in preparing young people for a skill-based economy

Vancouver, WA – Hundreds of education and youth development professionals from Washington, Oregon and across the country are convening October 19-21 in Vancouver for the *Bridge from School to Afterschool and Back Conference*. Young people spend only 20% of their waking hours in school. How they spend the remaining 80% has a profound impact on their well-being and future. Participants at this one of a kind conference will learn about the latest research and effective strategies available to support professionals working in the afterschool field with a focus on strengthening partnerships between afterschool programs and schools to best support students' school and life success.

Nationwide, more than 14 million children and youth are on their own after the school bell rings. In Oregon, 30% or 187,056 are unsupervised afterschool and in Washington State, 31%, or 347,056. Afterschool programs play a critical role in the lives of young people, particularly when it comes to the skill-based learning needed in our 21st century economy and workplace.

Kicking off the day's events on Tuesday, October 21' will be a keynote address by Donna Klein, founder and president of Corporate Voices for Working Families, the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector voice in the dialogue on public policy issues involving working families. Klein will speak to the current crisis businesses throughout the United States are facing as young people are often unprepared to succeed in our knowledge-based economy. This threatens our nation's ability to compete in the rapidly changing, more competitive global economy. If left unresolved, it is a crisis that will undercut the standard of living in the US for future generations. Klein will speak to the key role afterschool programs play in fostering skills for the 21st century workplace. Corporate Voices for Working Families is headquartered in Washington, D.C. More information is available at www.cvworkingfamilies.org.

Connecting this issue to the local scene, a panel of municipal leaders including Mayor Ed Gormley from McMinnville, OR and City Council Member Jeanne Harris from Vancouver, WA will speak to strategies cities are working on to partner with afterschool programs to address issues of safety, community building, academic success and cost-benefits of providing preventative services to children and youth. Municipal leaders can leverage the power, leadership and resources to advance afterschool efforts in their

communities.

What: Bridge from School to Afterschool and Back Conference

Who: Donna Klein, Corporate Voices for Working Families
Mayor Ed Gormley, McMinnville, OR
City Council Member Jeanne Harris, Vancouver, WA

When: Keynote Address by Donna Klein, Tuesday, October 21st 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Workshop featuring Donna Klein, Tuesday October 21st 9:45-11:15 a.m.
Workshop Panel featuring McMinnville Mayor Gormley and Vancouver
City Council Member Harris, Tuesday October 21st 9:45-11:15 a.m

Where: Vancouver Hilton and Conference Center in downtown Vancouver
301 W. 6th Street, Vancouver WA

For more information or to arrange for interviews with the featured speakers, contact Danielle Baer at (206) 336-6924 or by cell phone (206) 351-6141.

The *Bridge from School to Afterschool and Back Conference* is sponsored by School's Out Washington, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon ASK, Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning, SOAR helping kids reach for the sky.

More information on the conference is available at www.schoolsoutwashington.org.

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News or Press Release

News or press releases are two- to four-page reports of a newsworthy event. News releases should be written as if the event has already happened but should be ready the day of the event to distribute to media. Some tips about news releases:

- News releases should sound like a news story written by a sympathetic reporter. That means that they should be written in a reporter's voice, not an advocate's. Commentary in a news release should be in quotes and attributed to your spokesperson.
- News releases should have a headline. Some may also have a "subhead," or a second headline.
- News releases should have a "lead paragraph" that clearly states the news of the release, and answers the Who, What, When, Where and Why questions.

- Many news releases are structured as follows:
 - Lead Paragraph: Who, What, When, Where, Why
 - 2nd Paragraph: Quote from organizational spokesperson
 - 3rd Paragraph: More information about the announcement
 - 4th Paragraph: More information and examples
 - 5th Paragraph: Second quote from another organizational spokesperson
 - 6th Paragraph: Contact information for the organization
- Don't forget to include at the top of the document a name and phone number of someone the media can contact to follow up. Be sure to date the document.
- To build credibility with your local media, only send out a news release when you have a newsworthy event or story.

Sample News Release:

For Immediate Release:
October 16, 2008

Contact: Danielle Baer
School's Out Washington
206-323-2396

Washington State Turns the 'Lights On Afterschool'

Miss Washington Janet Harding, Olympia Mayor Doug Mah and hundreds of children, youth, parents and community members celebrate Lights On Afterschool! Day

Olympia, WA – Several hundred children, parents, business and community leaders joined today at Sylvester Park to celebrate Washington State's signature *Lights On Afterschool* rally – one of 7,500 such events across the nation and nearly 100 happening in Washington State. The events emphasize the importance of keeping the lights on and the doors open for afterschool programs. The rally in support of afterschool programs celebrates the critical role these programs play in keeping kids safe and healthy, inspiring them to learn, and relieving working parents of worries about their children's activities during the afternoon hours.

The Olympia *Lights On Afterschool* participants saw a performance by the Student Orchestra of Greater Olympia and toured booths set up by local afterschool programs showcasing and highlighting their activities and accomplishments. Hosting the event was our 2008 Miss Washington, Janet Harding. A passionate advocate for children's issues and education, Miss Washington shared why she felt compelled to get involved with this event.

"As an aspiring teacher, I care about the well-being of our kids, not just their education" stated Miss Washington. "And knowing that going into these afterschool programs, they're able to take something away that's life-long, and that's protecting them in the short-term – it matters a lot to teachers. It's not only about the younger kids. Teens who do not participate in afterschool

programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes, they're more likely to use marijuana and other drugs, and to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and engage in sexual activity at a young age. And so, keeping them occupied and keeping them educated – and providing those positive role models in afterschool programs, is not only benefiting them short-term, but long-term as well.”

Olympia Mayor Doug Mah and OSPI Chief of Staff Cathy Davidson also participated in the rally speaking to the important role of afterschool programs in supporting children, youth, families and the community at large.

“*Lights On Afterschool* celebrates the remarkable work being done by students who attend our afterschool programs,” Mayor Mah told the crowd. “It is a powerful reminder that afterschool programs keep children safe, inspire them to learn, and relieve working parents of worries about how their children spend their afternoons. The citizens and City of Olympia are committed to ensuring that children and youth have a place to go during the out-of-school time hours. This is demonstrated through our shared support for numerous and innovative afterschool partnerships and activities that provide academic support, enriching activities and a safe environment.”

Miss Washington had the honor of awarding the 2008 Afterschool Hall of Fame Champions to individuals who have shown leadership and commitment to the issue of afterschool. This year's honorees include:

- City Council Member of Vancouver, Jeanne Harris
- Community volunteer, Joan Yoshitomi
- United Way of Pierce County
- CEO/President of Boys & Girls Club of South Puget Sound, Rick Guild
- Executive Director of the Washington State Association of Principals, Gary Kipp
- 21st Century Site Supervisor, Brian Reese of Quincy, WA

The nationwide events marked the ninth annual Lights On Afterschool, sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance. The 2008 *Lights On Afterschool* marks the 10th anniversary of the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative, which has made afterschool programs available to hundreds of thousands of children across the nation over the last decade. Still, funding has not kept up with demand, and millions of children are alone and unsupervised each afternoon after the school days ends.

In 2007, Washington State approved dedicated funding to expand and start-up afterschool programs across the state. Currently, 18 sites are operating with those funds providing over 1,860 children and youth with access to an enriching, safe and healthy environment during the out-of-school time hours. Participants at the *Lights On Afterschool* rally were urged to make sure that funding for afterschool stays in our state budget as we approach the 2009 legislative session.

“We fought hard in 2007 for dedicated state dollars to expand afterschool programs in our state” stated Janet Frieling, Network Director at School’s Out Washington. “We know that more communities need funding to start-up or expand afterschool programs. Just last month, OSPI awarded a little over \$4 million in 21st Century Community Learning Center grant funds to 11 school districts across the state. However, this was out of over 35 proposals totaling over \$9 million dollars in request. *Lights On Afterschool* is a call to action to ensure that our state leaders hear loud and clear that afterschool funding is a priority and these programs serve a critical role

for children, youth and families across the state.”

The Olympia *Lights On Afterschool* event was sponsored by School’s Out Washington in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and ESD 113. Event sponsors included TwinStar Credit Union and Thurston Community Network with in-kind donations from Starbucks and Ralph’s Thriftway.

Lights On Afterschool is a nationwide event to recognize the critical importance of quality afterschool programs in the lives of children, their families and communities. It is a project of the Afterschool Alliance – a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information on the Alliance and *Lights On Afterschool* is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

School’s Out Washington provides services and guidance for organizations to ensure all young people have safe places to learn and grow when not in school. School’s Out is dedicated to building community systems to support quality out-of-school time programs for Washington’s 5-14 year olds through training, advocacy and leadership. More information is available at www.schoolsoutwashington.org

Press Kits

Press kits or packets contain several useful documents, such as news releases, fact sheets, statements, backgrounders, brochures, and more. You should distribute press kits at conferences, events, and to introduce journalists to your program and the afterschool issue. A press kit should contain general information on afterschool issues as well as on your specific program. Some tips on press kits:

- Press kits are typically distributed at news conferences, news briefings or in response to media requests for information.
- The kits should have the name and phone number of someone with your organization who can field follow-up calls from the media. Every piece of paper in the kit should have contact information on it.
- A typical press kit at an event might include:
 - A news release
 - A biography of each speaker
 - A fact sheet on your afterschool program
 - A fact sheet on afterschool programs in general
 - Your brochure
 - Any other relevant written material that looks professional and is useful to the media.

Newsletter Articles

We encourage you to write a newsletter article for your organization or a partner organization's newsletter. Provided below is a sample newsletter article included in School's Out Washington's last Washington Out-of-School Times publication.

Sample Newsletter Article

Mini-Grants Available to Build Partnerships with Principals and Schools Locally

In 2004, in partnership with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington Afterschool Network and School's Out Washington spent seven months gathering input from parents, young people, school staff, afterschool providers, policymakers, business leaders and community leaders to determine what Washington needs to build sustainable afterschool programs.

The statewide afterschool plan they developed shed light on the lack of public awareness around the important role of afterschool programs and how that creates a barrier to service delivery. To address the issue of building public will for afterschool, the Washington Afterschool Network plans to organize a statewide event each year for the next three years targeting a specific professional sector. This year, we have a unique opportunity with the National Association of Elementary School Principals holding their annual conference in Seattle. The Washington Afterschool Network is helping coordinate a workshop on partnering with afterschool programs to build strong learning communities. The curriculum for the workshop has been developed with funding and support from the C. S. Mott Foundation, NAESP, Collaborative Communications and Foundations Inc. Two Washington afterschool providers will serve on a panel to share experiences from their perspective.

Immediately following the session, Washington State principals are invited to attend a luncheon that will be more specific to efforts in our state and how they can support stronger partnerships with providers locally. To ensure that these efforts continue long after the event, School's Out Washington and the Washington Afterschool Network will be offering up to 6 mini-grants of up to \$2,000 for regional groups to plan similar gatherings in local communities focusing on building public will for afterschool among principals. Research shows that some critical components of a quality afterschool program such as including enriching opportunities that complement the school day and creating links between school day and afterschool staff are dependent upon principals who are aware of the benefits of partnering with afterschool programs. The mini-grant will provide an opportunity for communities to engage principals and build relationships to foster and strengthen such partnerships.

The mini-grant application is on our website and is due back to School's Out on April 20th. For more information, check our website or call us at (206) 323-2396 or toll-free at 1-(888)-419-9300.

IV. Research and Resources on Afterschool Programs

In recent years, more and more research has found positive benefits associated with attending high quality afterschool programs. Providing your target audience with articles and resources at your event that highlight the importance of afterschool programs speaking to the specific interests of the group you are reaching out to is important to build the case for why we must continue supporting programs.

Provided here is a list of websites with links to fact sheets, research articles, and other resources on afterschool. Additionally, on the School's Out Washington website at www.schoolsoutwashington.org, we have a section for resources and within that a section specifically targeting educators called "resources for educators". In this section of our website you will find fact sheets, links to recent studies and reports, articles, and toolkits.

Also available on our website, or we can provide copies to you by mail upon request, is our recently published Snapshot of Afterschool and Youth Development Programs in Washington State with findings from a Supply & Demand study of afterschool programs conducted by School's Out Washington in 2008. This is a great resources to share information about how many programs exist, the percentage of kids attending programs, where there is additional capacity, and the importance of quality when talking about programs.

In addition to resources on our website, we have an incredible library with over 2,000 resources for school-age afterschool providers in Washington State. We have books written for providers, educators, parents, children, youth and administrators on a variety of topics. Additionally, the library has videos, magazines and newsletters which can also be checked out on loan. Our resource files contain newsletter articles, research papers, reports and handouts from past trainings - all available for browsing. These items cover just about any afterschool-related topic imaginable.

Our website has a link to the Resource Library where you can browse the catalog. Anyone is welcome to come visit our office where the library is housed during business hours to check-out items. A maximum of 5 books may be checked out for a three week period. We require a one-time deposit of \$25 in order to check out books. If coming to the office is not convenient or possible for you, you may have books mailed to you. Our library is accessible to anyone in Washington State.

Below you will find a summary describing the different types of afterschool programs that exist. This list may be helpful for participants at your event to provide a document showing the scope and type of programs serving school-age youth during the out-of-school hours.

Summary of Afterschool & Youth Development Programs

Afterschool & Youth Development Programs are general terms used to describe an array of safe, structured programs that provide children and youth ages kindergarten through high school with a range of supervised activities intentionally designed to encourage learning and development outside the typical school day. Afterschool and youth development programs provide academic support, educational enrichment, cultural and social development activities, recreation, visual and performing arts, tutoring and homework services, leadership skills, career and college preparation, and development of the whole child. Out-of-school time refers to the time that children spend outside the classroom and includes time before school, afterschool, during the weekend, holidays, and summertime.

School-Age Care Programs (SAC): School-age care programs are licensed through the Department of Social & Health Services' Division of Child Care & Early Learning to provide after-school, before-school, or summertime programs for children ages five to twelve. Licensed care can be independent or part of larger organization. The number of children served in child care centers varies from small to very large and usually serve children up to age twelve. Programs in your district may include YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, Campfire, or school-based sponsored programs.

Family Child Care: licensed care for small numbers of children birth to 12 years old in a home setting. Family Child Care providers must meet educational and program requirements.

Child Care Center: Licensed care which can be independent or part of a larger organization, such as a school, church, or community center. The number of children child care centers serve vary considerably, from small to very large, and usually serve children up to age twelve. Family Child Care providers must meet educational and program requirements.

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC): The 21st CCLC Program is part of the No Child Left Behind Act. 21st CCLC provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low performing schools. The tutorial services and academic enrichment activities provided through 21st CCLC are designed to help students meet local and state academic standards in subjects such as reading and math. In addition 21st CCLC programs provide youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, art, music and recreation programs, counseling and character education to enhance the academic component of the program.

Supplemental Educational Services: Supplemental educational services are tutoring or other supplemental academic enrichment activities beyond the regular school day. Services are to be of high quality, research-based, and designed to improve the students' academic achievement. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 enables parents to select supplemental educational services for their children from the Office of

Superintendent's (OSPI) approved provider list. Eligible students are those (1) not meeting OSPI's standards in reading and/or math and (2) from low-income families. For a complete list of OSPI's approved supplemental services providers, please visit the following website: <http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/pubdocs/SESApprovedProviders.doc>.

Additional Out-of-School Time Programs: These can include recreational programs or exempt care programs that provide youth ages five to 18 with a variety of supervised activities beyond the traditional school day. Examples of programs include drop-in, organized sports, extracurricular activities, Park & Recreation, ethnic and cultural, faith-based, community-service, and youth development.

Links to Resources on Afterschool

All these links can also be found online at www.schoolsoutwashington.org. Look for the link on the front page for "Innovation Grant Resources."

Superintendents' Perspectives on the "New Day for Learning" Report

Available at:

<http://www.aasa.org/files/PDFs/Focus/Superintendents'%20Perspectives%20on%20A%20New%20Day%20for%20Learning%20FINAL.pdf>

Extended Learning Opportunities: A Policy Statement of the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Available at:

<http://www.ccsso.org/content/PDFs/PolicyStatementOnExtendedLearningOpportunities.pdf>.

Making the Case for New Day for Learning: Re-envisioning How, When, and Where Students Learn.

Available at:

<http://www.newdayforlearning.org/documents/NDLMakingtheCase.pdf>

After-School Programs and Academics: Implications for Policy, Practice, and Research, Social Policy Report: Giving Child and Youth Development Knowledge Away. Commissioned by William T. Grant Foundation.

Available at: <http://www.srkd.org/documents/publications/spr/spr22-2.pdf>

Outcomes Linked to High Quality Afterschool Programs: Longitudinal Findings from the Study of Promising Afterschool Programs by Deborah Lowe Vandell, Elizabeth Reisner and Kim M. Pierce.

Available at:

<http://www.policystudies.com/studies/youth/Promising%20Programs%20Final%20Report%20FINAL%2010-23-07.pdf>

Afterschool program cost calculator. This out-of-school time program cost calculator helps users calculate the costs of various options for high-quality OST programs. The calculator comes with a number of other resources, including thumbnail sketches of actual programs and links to publications on funding and strategies for promoting program quality.

Available at: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/cost-of-quality/Pages/default.aspx>.

Harvard Family Research Project

Since 1983, the HFRP has helped stakeholders develop and evaluate strategies to promote the well being of children, youth, families, and their communities. HFRP works primarily within three areas that support children's learning and development—early childhood education, out-of-school time programming, and family and community support in education. Underpinning all of HFRP's work is

a commitment to evaluation for strategic decision making, learning, and accountability.

Some recent publications of the Harvard Family Research Group:

Supporting Student Outcomes Through Expanded Learning Opportunities by Priscilla M. Little. This paper looks at the role of after school and summer learning programs in supporting student success. The paper explores how to bridge the divide between out-of-school time programs and schools by offering research-derived principles for effective expanded learning partnerships. It was commissioned by Learning Point Associates and the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS).

The full report is available at: <http://www.hfrp.org/out-of-school-time/publications-resources/supporting-student-outcomes-through-expanded-learning-opportunities>.

After school Programs in the 21st Century

Available at: <http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/after-school-programs-in-the-21st-century-their-potential-and-what-it-takes-to-achieve-it>

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a national, bipartisan, nonprofit anti-crime organization of more than 3,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders and violence survivors. Members include top law enforcement leaders in the country, including presidents of many state and national law enforcement associations. Fight Crime: Invest in Kids publishes research on crime prevention strategies, informs the public and policymakers about those findings, and urges investment in programs proven effective by research, including after-school programs for children and teens, and interventions to get troubled kids back on track.

Website: http://www.fightcrime.org/issue_aftersch.php, and some of their publications:

America's After-School Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime, or Youth Enrichment and Achievement.

Full report available at: <http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/as2000.pdf>

America's After-School Choice: Juvenile Crime or Safe Learning Time. State fact sheet

Available at: <http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/state21st/washington21st.pdf>

National League of Cities Youth Education and Family Council provides tools and resources to assist cities in supporting youth and their families. Several publications including *Assessing Local Afterschool Resources and Needs* and *Expanding Afterschool Opportunities* can be found on their website:

<http://www.nlc.org/IYEF/education/afterschool/resources.aspx>

Afterschool Alliance

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of afterschool programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children. It is supported by a group of public, private and nonprofit organizations that share the Alliance's vision of ensuring that all children have access to afterschool programs by 2010.

The Afterschool Alliance website, www.afterschoolalliance.org, has a variety of resources related to policy, funding, engaging media and advocacy. They also have range of issue briefs and fact sheets on topics such as engaging older youth, building partnerships with schools, academic benefits of afterschool, STEM, keeping kids safe, afterschool and workforce development.

The Afterschool Alliance website is www.afterschoolalliance.org

Afterschool Investment Project

Afterschool Investments project provides technical assistance to Child Care and Development Fund grantees and other State and local leaders supporting afterschool efforts. Their website is: <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/>.

Afterschool Investment Project includes State Profiles to provide a snapshot of the state of "afterschool," as well as an opportunity to compare afterschool activities across the country. The State Profiles provide key data and descriptions of the afterschool landscape, which includes a range of out-of-school time programming that can occur before and after school, on weekends, and during summer months. They are designed to serve as a resource for policymakers, administrators, and providers. Washington State's profile can be found at: <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/statep.html>

Afterschool Investments Project also has a toolkit on creating strong partnerships between schools and afterschool programs: *Creating a Vision for Afterschool Partnerships* can be found at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/visioning-tool.pdf>

The Finance Project

The Finance Project is a specialized non-profit research, consulting, technical assistance, and training firm for public and private sector leaders nationwide. The Finance Project helps leaders make smart investment decisions, develop sound financing strategies, and build solid partnerships that benefit children, families, and communities. Their website has a wealth of information on funding, partnership building, sustainability and other financing related strategies for out-of-school time projects and other children and youth related issues.

www.financeproject.org – click on Publications at top to access all publications. Some are free to download and others are for purchase.

Child Trends

Child Trends conducts, compiles, and disseminates research and evaluates out-of-school time programs and shares its work with practitioners in the field, policy makers, the media, and with youth who use these programs. They have a wealth of information on their website available at www.childtrends.org

A sampling of the publication titles include:

Building Community Partnerships: Tips for Out-of-School Time Programs

Strategies for Improving Out-of-School time Programs in Rural Communities

Staff Selection: What's Important for Out-of-school Time Programs

Assessing School Engagement: A guide for out-of-school time Program

Practitioners

IV. National Association of Elementary School Principals' Curriculum on Partnering with Afterschool Programs

The National Association of Elementary School Principals has created several publications on the positive impact of afterschool programs in improving students learning during the school day. NAESP released their publication, *Leading After-School Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* in 2004. This book provides principals with strategies and resources to re-imagine the learning day highlighting the benefits of afterschool programs for the entire school community and the important role principals play in supporting a successful school/afterschool partnership.

Leading After-School Learning Communities includes information on what makes a quality afterschool program going in depth into six standards principals should keep in mind: vision; community catalyst; infrastructure; quality content; evaluation; and championing afterschool.

To continue their work in this area, NAESP developed a curriculum related to their work around principal's engagement with afterschool programs. The curriculum included here with the guidebook has activities tailored to principals to explore the benefits of afterschool programs and strategies to create strong partnerships. Past Innovation Project grantees have used sections from the curriculum in their events.

To place an order or for more information on the NAESP publications please contact:

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