



**United Way
of Massachusetts Bay**

Connecting Schools & Afterschools Initiative

March, 2009

Connecting Schools with Afterschools better serves children and families by:

- Helping youth balance and adapt to three diverse worlds: school, afterschool, and home
- Improving staff communications & partnerships between school, afterschool & families
- Increasing program curricular alignment
- Formalizing positive, results-based relationships between each institution's management teams

Agency Goals

Connecting Schools and Afterschool to:

- **Improve Communications**
- **Increase Curriculum Alignment**
- **Formalize Policies/Procedures**

Connecting Schools and Afterschools

- 6% of IYO investment
- 27 agencies, 45% of AS/OST agencies
- 63 “connecting” program sites
- 9,825 youth served at “connecting” program sites with 90 schools
- Boston, Chelsea, Lynn, Cambridge, Malden, Newton, Salem, Woburn, Randolph, Revere, Peabody, Everett, Somerville

Top 5 connecting activities

- Designated staff has regular communication with classroom teachers (55 sites)
- Designated staff has consistent “in school time” each week (44 sites)
- AS/OST curriculum connected to the Mass. Frameworks and learning objectives (24 sites)
- Designated staff has regularly scheduled meetings with principals (22 sites)
- Formally participate in parent-teacher conferences and or IEP meetings for youth in program (22 program sites)

UWMB/NIOST Initiative Experience

Readiness Factors

- Time available to spend in schools
- Strong organizational & management strategies
- High quality afterschool staff
- Readiness of school to invest in partnership
- Build trust

Goal #1: Examples of Improved Communication

- Communicating with School Teachers: goal charts; progress reports; homework- tickets/stamps/weekly charts, behavior issues etc.
- Regular meetings with principals, MELS, ELT managers
- Integrating afterschool into open house, K-registration, family nights, classroom readers program & supporting school fundraisers
- Afterschool staff placed in classrooms as teacher assistants

Goal #2: Examples of Increased Curriculum Alignment

- Improve understanding of homework assignments
- School provides professional development for afterschool program staff
- Collaborate with teachers to develop afterschool curricula & link to Mass. Frameworks
- Regular classroom visits, observations
- Using math/ literacy curriculum recommended by teachers
- Sharing materials and resources

Goal #3: Examples of Formalizing Policy Changes

- Afterschool staff participate in school councils, student support teams, principal search committees, PTA/PTO, IEP meetings, in-service school trainings, serve as para's in school
- School teachers/principals serve on Afterschool Board & advisories
- Receive school attendance daily
- Adapt common behavior management methods
- Develop new staffing structure policies: require in-school time, hire school-afterschool coordinator

Initiative Successes

- **FY07/08/09 Capacity-Building Initiative for UWMBMV Agencies**
 - 16 agencies (60% in measure) received TA with school teams to develop action plans
 - 9 Links to Learning Trainings (3 with school partners)
 - Average attendance= 20
 - Networking/sharing meetings- 2-3 per year
 - Topics covered:
 - Theoretical Framework & Changing Landscape
 - Types of Bridging
 - Cultural Barriers
 - Readiness factors
 - Strategies & tools; communication/coordination, aligning curriculum to Mass. frameworks; policies/procedures
 - Increasing youth motivation and engagement
 - Summer programming, homework, thematic curriculum, social-emotional curriculum
 - Nearly 100% participation during three years

Initiative Successes

- May, 2005 Connecting Schools and Afterschools Summit: Introduction and bidders conference- 200 attended
- Toolkit:
 - Connecting Schools & Afterschools: 15 Ways to Improve Partnerships
 - Other states requesting toolkit: Indiana, Rhode Island, California etc
- Conferences/ Workshops: Statewide MADCA, MAP; National NIOST Summer Series, NAA presentations
- June, 2007 Connecting Schools and Afterschools Symposium: 150 Mayors, Superintendents, Principals & AS providers
- November, 2008 Afterschool Curriculum Conference- partnered with Boston Children's Museum, DELTA's and others
- January, 2009 Mandatory training for all EEC Licensors