



After School Matters:
A Study of After School Programs in Pasadena and Options for the
Future

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Chapter 1

Introduction

We are living in a world that is constantly changing, Technology is rapidly changing, cities are expanding, and we are being challenged to make less of an impact on the environment. With all of these changes people's lives have changed as well. Gradually, over the last 30 years, more and more households have changed from having just one parent work to support the family to both parents working. This alteration of the average family situation has brought about changes regarding a number of societal issues, perhaps most prominently the need for after school programs. Most jobs require a 9:00AM-5:00PM work schedule. This has begun to present a problem in our society because the after school hours for children usually start at 3:00PM, which clearly overlaps with regular work schedules. The hours between 3:00 and 6:00 did not present much of a problem in the past because most families had a parent, typically the mother, who stayed home and took care of the child after school. However, with women's

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statistics, studies done on after school programs and information given to me by organizations that work with after school issues.

I am also writing this paper from a position of experience in after school care. I have been working with children since I was 14 years old, which has given me years of experience in

The second chapter of my report starts with the history of after school programs in Pasadena. I have reviewed the Pasadena after school programs from their origins until the present, tracking the progress and changes that have been made. I also provide a brief history of after school programs in the U.S. so that the reader is able to gauge how Pasadena's after school programs connect to the general trend of after school programs in the country.

The third chapter is a literature review of after school programs. This chapter gives an overview of why after school programs are important and what can improve the quality of after school programs. The final part of the chapter is

academic lessons. The staff also began to become more specialized at certain playgrounds, becoming stricter and acting as the children's police.¹⁰

Around the turn of the 20th century, more formed after school programs began to emerge building upon what the playground programs had created. Many of the after school programs were held in churches or other public buildings. The programs grew quickly both in enrollment and in expanding activities. One after school program that was created in 1876 in Manhattan both expanded into a larger facility to meet its growing need and expanded its offering of activities to include a natural history club, fife lessons, drum lessons, bugle corps , singing classes, writing and bookkeeping classes, and wrestling.¹¹ By 1921 around 75 churches in Chicago were providing after school programs thanks to their largest sponsors, the Boys' Club and the Settlements.¹²

Although at this time after school programs were growing rapidly in curriculum and size, the purpose of the after school program had yet to be defined. During the 1920s the purpose of after school programs began to take shape in the form of "helping children 'learn to live'" and

together to work on this project they decided to call it the coordinated plan.¹⁸ Most after school programs in the U.S were using diverse funding streams to fund their programs at this time, but Pasadena was different because it had the school district and the city as the only two funding sources for their program.

The program was an immediate success, providing a quality physical activity program for PUSD students after school. Within the first few years there were over 30 school playgrounds that ran after school programs. To ensure that the after school programs continued to thrive, the local government created an after school commission to help guide the program. There were only a few people on the commission when it first started, including one member of the city council and one member of the school board. This after school commission had a significant amount of power because, according to the Pasadena education code, they were able to pass special taxes that were levied on the homeowners of Pasadena, without the community voting on the tax.¹⁹

In 1953 Ed Bignell took over for Cicil Martin as the head of the Pasadena after school programs, now called the Coordinated Plan. When Bignell took over he readily admits that the program already worked well, but Bignell decided to make the program even stronger. One of the most important changes that Bignell undertook was to enlarge the commission so that two of the City board members were on the commission. Two of the school district members were on the commission, the superintendent attended every meeting, the city manager sat in on meetings as an ex-official and Bignell himself was also on the commission. Bignell also included community members on the commission so that the community's input was heard by the commission. The commission held eleven slots for community members, including one spot for a teenage student. Bignell explained that community members were selected by the commission members and were usually people who were believed to be a major asset to the community. For instance at one point Pasadena's Mayor held the community member's spot on the commission. The teenagers selected to the commission also had to be outstanding students, but Bignell felt it was important to have a young person on the commiss

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School district became angered that they were paying for many of the hidden expenses in the program. For instance most of the swimming pools that were being used by the program were owned by the schools, so the school ended up paying for all of the chlorine on top of the other expenses that they were already putting towards the program. Eventually these disagreements lead to the end of the Coordinated Plan in 1975 when the Pasadena Unified School District and the city of Pasadena decided to stop working together

reading, mathematics, and citizenship.²⁸ Another study of the San Diego after school program called “6 to 6” found that the students who attended the program increased their SAT-9 reading scores by an average of 57% and raised their SAT-9 math score by an average of 44%.²⁹ These two studies strongly support the importance of academic components to after school programs, illustrating why giving children one-on-one attention helps raise their level of achievement in academics.

Enrichment-based activities have also been proven to be an important component in many after school programs. After school programs are offered to children who are just starting to become independent for the first time in their lives. Children are beginning to find out who they are and who they want to be, which can be a challenging and potentially dangerous period in young people’s lives. It is important to establish healthy and constructive options in a child’s life because bad decisions made at a young age can often lead to dangerous lifestyles. Many of the classes that enrichment based after school programs offer such as computer literacy, cooking, and arts and crafts help expose children to new experiences which they are otherwise unable to get at school or at home. By exposing children to these new activities, after school programs play an important role in helping children find what they like to do and who they want to be. After school programs also help to guide their students to make better decisions about how they spend their out of school time by giving them productive and fun options to staying at home.³⁰

Incorporating physical activity into an after school program’s curriculum is another way in which after school programs are able to offer students productive choices on how to spend time out of school. Sports are a good way to get children active and having fun while still learning values such as working together, following the rules, and good sportsmanship. Sports programs are also helpful by promoting physical health by getting children physically active. Getting children physically active is becoming increasingly important, as schools are cutting out Physical Education (P.E.) programs.³¹ This change in curriculum leaves children no physical outlet. By offering sports, after school programs help show students they can excel physically as well as mentally.

The goal of each individual program makes a large difference on how the program is run. After school programs that make a point of offering all three types of programs, academics, enrichment and physical activity, tend to be the most successful. The reason programs with a wide range of activities enjoy more success than others is that they are well equipped to meet each individual child’s needs.³² Programs such as those offered by the Pasadena City Parks and Recreation Department, which focus on physical activity, are only successful at serving a portion of students who are more physically inclined. The program does fill the gaps in P.E. classes, but this program ignores a large portion of the student population by not offering an academic component. Academic help is in high demand and for many students it is more important for

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³¹ Buote, J. Brenda “Citing Health Issues, Advocates Want Renewed Focus On PHYS ED” The Boston Globe June 24, 2004

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them to get one-on-one help with their homework than to play sports. Some after- school evaluators would not even consider the Parks and Recreation program an after school program because it does not offer students academic help.^{33 es17}

were in after school programs.³⁷ Similar results were also found when the After School Program Corporation in New York City asked parents to identify their reasons for sending their children to after school programs. The results indicated that the number one reason was identified as “making sure that their children have a safe place to go after school.”³⁸ These results illustrate that after school programs have played an important roll in keeping children safe when parents are unable to supervise their children.

After school programs offer a productive alternative for kids who would otherwise be staying at home or in dangerous locations where the kinds of activities described earlier occur. At many after school programs children are offered an opportunity to learn new skills or get active, which is something many unfortunately do not get at home on a daily basis. In fact the most common activity for children at home has become watching television, which rarely teaches children something of value and discourages physical activity. A study using a random sample of twelve year olds found that children watch an average of 15 hours of television a week, compared with 24 hours a week of school and 74 hours a week of sleeping.³⁹ This statistic indicates that after school programs are more necessary than ever because with television taking a large portion of most children's time and offering little value in return, children are in need of valuable educational experiences outside of school.

After school programs have also been found to be valuable for building children’s sense of community. After school programs are not just a place where children take classes and get help on homework. Children in the programs also learn social skills through interacting with one another which helps build community and a sense of confidence. To most children, their out-of-school time is seen as free time they want to spend hanging out with their friends and pursuing their own interests.⁴⁰ After school programs are places that allow this social interaction and interest seeking to take place in a controlled and safe environment. After school programs allow for social growth by having supervisors who make sure every child is included in the program and no one is treated in a hurtful way. Creating a sense of security amongst the children helps create a healthy community in which the children are able to grow socially.

Although there have been studies that prove that after school programs are effective when they are properly run, it is also important to illustrate that after school programs are currently facing potential problems that can significantly weaken the program. The first of these problems is the issue of size. Programs need to be limited in the number of students so they do not lose their intimate feel. There is a rising demand for after school programs, which means that more students are taking up spaces within the programs. This can lead to the problem of overcrowding, which hurts children who truly need the one-on-one attention with their academic work. Overcrowding also becomes a problem because the instructors are unable to control overcrowded classrooms, which makes the programs feel more like baby-sitting than an intimate

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program where the staff and children get to know one another.⁴¹ This problem needs to be dealt with by expanding programs and adding more staff members. This will allow all students the opportunity to attend a good after school program while maintaining the community atmosphere.

Although expanding after school programs is needed to keep student teacher-ratios low, program expansion is currently a problem due to current lack of funding. Federal, state, and local governments do provide funding for after school programs. However, there needs to be a significant increase in funding by these governments because, currently, 86% of after school funding is derived from parent fees.⁴² This creates multiple problems, including especially for low-income parents who are unable to pay. Cutting out lower and moderate-income children who can not afford the programs is highly problematic. It creates an unfair situation where students from low and moderate-income households, who may benefit from an after school program as much, if not more than more affluent children, are unable to get the same experiences and educational opportunities.⁴³ There are programs that do operate on a sliding scale which allows parents who qualify for free or reduced lunch during the school days to pay little to nothing for the after school programs. However, not all after school programs offer these opportunities and there are usually waiting lists for children at these programs, which means there are still children who are not being served.

Another problem created by the lack of funding for after school programs are the low salaries in the programs that typically do not pay well enough to attract and retain a professional staff. According to one study, after school workers usually work an average of twenty hours a week and wages average between \$5 and \$9 an hour without benefits for “front line staff” and \$8 to \$15 per hour for site coordinators.⁴⁴ These low salaries make it hard to attract professionally trained teachers for front line staff positions, which have the most interactions with the children. This becomes a problem because the staff at an after school program set examples that can have an important impact on the children, and if the staff is not acting professionally then children will take after them because they look up to staff members.⁴⁵ The low wages also creates a high turnover rate amongst staff members, as the staff feels less obligated to their job and are constantly looking for better opportunities. With staff members frequently leaving, programs lose their continuity because they need to constantly rehire new staff members. High turnover rates also make it hard to create a strong community for the children because of the constantly changing faces amongst the staff. High turnover rates also create a problem because the programs stop being selective of their workers. Many programs will hire workers who are not qualified to work with children because they believe the new worker will just leave soon.⁴⁶

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After school programs are an effective way to educate and expose children to new experiences. With the growing number of working parents and school programs being squeezed because of budget issues, after school programs are becoming an essential part of keeping children safe and active. However, after school programs need to be run properly if they are going to be helpful to children. Currently there are problems such as a lack of funding and high turnover rates at many after school programs that are damaging their effectiveness. To keep these programs operating at a high efficiency there is a need for the increase in funding so that after school programs can expand while maintaining a community for any child to enjoy.

8) Providing adequate space: It was found that providing a sufficient amount of indoor and outdoor space allows for programs to offer a wider array of activities as well as giving the children the necessary space they need to fully participate in activities. There were no specific suggestions on how much space should be given per child.⁶⁰

9) Maintaining continuity and becoming complementary with regular day school: Making sure that there is a connection between what the students learn in school and what they learn in the

Chapter 4

Supply

Overall Supply

To get an understanding of what kind of after school programs are available in Pasadena

This section provides a more detailed look at the supply of after school programs in Pasadena by focusing on the four major after school care providers in Pasadena. These programs are: The YMCA of Pasadena, The City Parks and Recreation program, Pasadena LEARNs, and CORAL. The four largest after school care providers are by no means the only after school providers in Pasadena, but this section provides an overview of the comparative structure of the major after school programs, based on interviews, site visits and standards suggested by outside surveys.

The YMCA of Pasadena: Information was obtained through interviews with Karen Aidlot the head of the Pasadena YMCA and from a site visit.

Program Goal: “The Pasadena YMCA Before and After School Adventures Program provides every child a safe, positive, and quality program that is enriching, affordable, and age-appropriate. Our program supplements and supports a child’s experience at home and school and is designed with the working family in mind.”

Number and Locations of Sites: The Pasadena YMCA has four programs located at Linda Vista Elementary School, Audubon School, Don Benito Elementary School, Sierra Madre Community Center which serves students from Sierra Madre and Sierra Mesa Schools and a site at the Pasadena Nazarene Church which serves adolescents with developmental disabilities.

Curriculum: The Pasadena YMCA Curriculum “is based on the development and educational needs and interests of school-age children. The Curriculum includes core components such as homework and academic support, sports and fitness readiness including team individual and life time sports, group and team building activities and games and activities that focus on creativity, innovation and experimentation.” At least three times a week the children focus on physical fitness as well as one enrichment activity each day.

Length of Program Time: 3:05- 6:30

Awards or Acknowledgments: None

Observations from Site Visit: McKinley elementary school was the site I visited. The YMCA program at McKinley has a little over 100 students enrolled in the program out of the 620 students that are currently enrolled in the school. McKinley is a school that is known for its emphasis on the arts. It received an average API test score of 722 which is slightly under the average test score of 730 to elementary schools in Pasadena69.

The day that I attended the YMCA after school program at McKinley was not a typical day. Students were getting ready for a parent night when parents come to the program to see what the children have been doing. Parent nights also consist of a party for the students, with all of the parents bringing food for a potluck dinner. Also I had my visit on a Friday which is a day when the students are not given any homework, and therefore there is no homework time in the schedule.

During my site visit I was able to observe free play with some of the younger students. During the free play time around 40 children were in one room which apparently is usually used by only 20 YMCA children. However, the Girl Scouts were using their facility on that day so

On a normal day, the program would start with the students all checking in and then getting their snack. After the first half an hour the program changes to an academic activity, either reading aloud or homework time. After the academic activity the program shifts to an activity called Characters Who Count, involving speaking to the children about what it means to be a good person and what words like respect, responsibility and citizenship mean. The Characters That Count activity usually lasts about 45 minutes. Afterwards the program has a singing activity and later a team building activity. If there is any extra time left in the schedule the children are able to choose what they want to do.

According to the RAND study, quality after school programs should maintain a maximum student to staff ratio of 15:1. The YMCA program not only reaches this goal, but goes beyond it by maintaining a maximum student to staff ratio of 12:1. The RAND study also states that high quality after school programs should offer a wide variety of activities to their students. It is difficult to know, from my observation, whether the YMCA program offers enough activities for their students. On the day I visited, the program had multiple activities happening at one time, but most of them were games, not academic, physical, or enrichment activities. This may not have been a typical day. The schedule indicated that the program offers many different activities for the children. The program may not offer enough enrichment activities for the children, such as arts and crafts.

Another aspect of a quality program, according to the RAND study, is to offer age appropriate activities for their students.⁷³ When I observed both the elementary and middle school students, all of them seemed to be engaged in an activity and for the most part they looked like they were having fun, which indicates that the activities offered at that YMCA site are age appropriate. Finally, the RAND study also suggests that after school programs should maintain a positive emotional environment for their students.⁷⁴ The students at this YMCA site appeared to feel very comfortable. Many of them felt safe enough to come up to me, a perfect stranger, and ask me who I was and what I was doing. I believe these students did this because they felt secure in the YMCA environment and knew that no one who the program would allow would harm them. Additionally, I observed the staff interacting with the students and all of the staff members seemed to be engaged in activities with the students and positively interacting.

Pasadena LEARNS: Information was obtained through interviews with Karen Cantrell the interim head director of Pasadena LEARNS.

Program Goals: The Pasadena LEARNS, “Leading Educational Achievement Revitalizing Neighborhoods,” is an after-school program located in the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) that aims to use academic and enrichment programming to improve academic performance, strengthen youth leadership and service opportunities, and reduce drug use and

arts, music, leadership and sports that motivate, interest and engage students⁷⁵.(Pasadena LEARN evaluation)

Number of Locations: The Pasadena LEARNs program currently has 20 different locations.

Number of Middle Schools: 3

Number of Elementary Schools: 17

Number of Children Served: Pasadena LEARNs serves approximately 2,000 children, with an average of 70-130 children at each site.

Percentage of Students From Public School: 100%

Are The Programs at Maximum Capacity? : Some of the programs, including the sites at Cleveland and Jackson, fill up to the point that some children are unable to attend, while other

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21st Century Education Foundation. In addition to these two grants LEARNs also uses the money from parent dues to help fund the program.

Awards or Acknowledgments: Pasadena LEARNs has been recognized by the state of California Department of Education as one of the 15 promising practices program in the state of California.

Observations From My Site Visit:

The LEARNs site that I visited while doing my observation was Willard Elementary School. Willard LEARNs program has 120-130 children enrolled in its program out of 620 students enrolled in the entire school. The Average API test scores at Willard Elementary are 762, which is significantly higher than the district average score of 730.⁷⁶

Observations From My Site Visit:

My site visit took place at the Bright Program which is part of Coral and is located at Jackie Robinson Park. Bright is a site that is not located on a school campus but instead is a community after school program. Bright has spaces for children in elementary school up through high school. Currently there are 70 children enrolled at this site. The Program runs as early as 1:00 PM on Mondays, although most days the program starts at 3:00 PM because some children get out of school early, through 6:00 PM.

Bright is unique among the programs that I had visited because it offers youth leadership positions to high school students. This position offers teenagers a position of responsibilities while also offering the youth leader's classes so that they are also able to learn at the program. This was an interesting tactic used to create a community consisting of gradations of responsibility and also is a good way to mix the different ages at the program.

The main focus at the program is to increase literacy levels amongst students so that they will be able to thrive academically. To achieve this goal Bright has mandatory reading time each day where each child is required to read a book or story and depending on one's grade level, a certain amount of writing about what they read is required. The writing requirements are as follows: 3rd graders write 1 paragraph minimum, 4th graders write 2 paragraphs minimum, 5th graders write 3 paragraphs minimum and 6th through 8th graders write 1 page minimum. Every one of the children's writings is saved in a file so that there is documentation of the children's work. I watched a few students working at the table designated for reading and writing and they were all hard at work.

On top of focusing on increasing literacy, Bright also offers its children enrichment classes. Many of these classes are staffed by outside organizations, for instance California Living Histories comes to the program once a week to run a class for the Bright students. Bright also offers a robotics class which is run by a woman from outside the actual Bright program. I was able to observe part of the robotics class. It appeared that the children in the class were both learning about the different robot parts that the teacher was showing the students while still having fun with the material. There were only 10 students total in the class so the teacher was able to give all of the students in the class individual attention.

Bright also offers a computer literacy class to help students who do not have access to computer technology at home to get caught up to speed with computers. The class uses only academic based software so that students are also learning other subjects while also learning how to use the computers. While observing the class I watched the teacher walk around and talk with each individual student about his/her project.

For the students ages 12 and up there was a chess class offered. This class was made up mostly of youth leaders and all of the students were listening intently as the chess teacher was explaining strategies on how to use pawns. After the teacher gave his instructions the students paired up and w'O,08e4b7w0,8p4N9700UwU8 4Oqw] é% sNO,'7UUz5N9b7U5éd s [8m4Nb7''wwNO7,tmis t

taking part in the physical activity, I went to the park's indoor gym where a park staff member was giving the children instructions on how to do different basketball drills. Most of the children were listening and when it came time to do the drills all of the children were taking part in the drills. There were also Bright staff members in the gym supervising making sure that everything was running smoothly.

The Bright program keeps a maximum student to staff ratio of 12:1 which is in accordance with the 15:1 maximum that the RAND study suggests.⁸³ The RAND study also states that quality after school programs should offer a wide variety of activities to the students.⁸⁴ From my observations it seems clear that the students at the Bright program are offered a wide variety of activities covering the important three areas of academics, physical activity, and enrichment. By offering such a wide variety of activities the Bright program is conducting its program as the RAND study suggests.⁸⁵ From what I observed the Bright program did a quality job of providing activities that were appropriate for the different age levels that they served, consistent with the RAND Study's suggestion of offering age appropriate activity.⁸⁶ Finally the RAND study also suggests that a quality after school program should maintain a positive emotional environment, which for the Bright program seemed to provide.⁸⁷ For the short period of time that I observed the Bright program it looked as though the students felt comfortable and were having positive interactions with the staff members.

City Parks & Recreation Program: All information in this section was obtained through interviews with Darrel Walker the director of the city program, Lisa Fowler a staff member of the city program and, Elana Fernandez an intern from USC working at the city program.

Program Goals: "Pasadena Parks and Recreation Department is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all while providing programming, facilities and relationships which enrich and enlighten the lives of all families thus building a strong, healthy foundation for our future."⁸⁸

Number of Sites: The City of Pasadena Human Services and Recreation Department are currently running 20 after school sites in Pasadena.

Number of elementary school sites: 16

Number of middle school sites: 1

Number of high school sites: 0

Number of Children Served: Approximately 1,500 depending on the day

⁸³ Beckett Megan, Hawken Angela, and Jackowitz Alison Accountability for After-School Care: Devising Standards and Measuring Adherence to Them" RAND Distribution Services 2001 p20

⁸⁴ Beckett Megan, Hawken Angela, and Jackowitz Alison Accountability for After-School Care: Devising Standards and Measuring Adherence to Them" RAND Distribution Services 2001 p17

⁸⁵ Beckett Megan, Hawken Angela, and Jackowitz Alison Accountability for After school Care: Devising Standards and Measuring Adherence to Them" RAND Distribution Services 2001 p17

⁸⁶ Beckett Megan, Hawken Angela, and Jackowitz Alison Accountability for After school Care: Devising Standards and Measuring Adherence to Them" RAND Distribution Services 2001 p 22-23

⁸⁷ Beckett Megan, Hawken Angela, and Jackowitz Alison Accountability for After-School Care: Devising Standards and Measuring Adherence to Them" RAND Distribution Services 2001 p 19

⁸⁸ City of Pasadena Webpage April 14, 2005 <http://www.ci.pasadena.tx.us/parks.htm>

Percentage of Students From Public School: 100%

Are The Programs at Maximum Capacity?: They will take any child that wants to go to the program so they are never at full capacity.

Cost Of Program: The Cost of the normal after school programs are free, however special activities such as the youth sports teams, special events and field trips cost money.

How Much Does It Cost To Run The Program: \$1.5 million

Curriculum: The City run after school program focuses primarily on physical fitness in their curriculum. They have a few enrichment activities such as arts and crafts but for the most part the children are physically active. The program just adopted a brand new athletic program called Sports Play and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARKS) which uses an interactive program that focuses on the prevention of childhood obesity.

Length of Program Time: Program runs from the end of school until 6:00

Hiring Process: To get hired there is both an application process as well as an interview process. Staff members are also drug tested before being hired. Salaries for recreation leaders range from \$8.00-\$10.40, instructor's salaries range from \$9.00-\$15.00, and site coordinator salaries range from \$13.00-\$18.00.

Funding:

After homework time was over the children lined up in a single file line for snack. Some of the older children including, sixth seventh and eighth graders, were chosen to help with snack. The snack that day was bananas and juice. Snack lasted about 25 minutes.

When snack time ended the children were broken up into two groups of older children who were 4th grade or higher and younger children in kindergarten up through 3rd grade. The older children participated in an obstacle course for their structured physical activity while the younger kids played in the sand box/ swing set. For the obstacle course two children were selected as team captains to select the two teams. The obstacle course worked like a relay game with each child running through the obstacle course once. The obstacle course was long and it seemed to tire out just about every child that went through it. Every child was expected to participate in this event so that all children had some sort of physical activity. The younger children who were playing in the swing area did not seem to have any structure to their play. The structured play lasted for about 1 hour.

After the structured play ended the children were taken back to the area where they ate snack and were allowed to pretty much play anywhere they wanted as long as it was within plain view of the staff. Some children started a wall ball r much plaba

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interactions leading to a favorable emotional environment in accordance with the RAND study's suggestions.⁹³

Chapter 5

Potential Demand: A Need Assessment of After School Programs

As of yet, no study has been done to examine the number of children currently attending after school programs in Pasadena or the number who are unable to attend for one reason or another. This lack of a comprehensive study makes it difficult to analyze the potential demand. Evaluating the changing demographics in Pasadena provides one method for determining the potential demand for after school programs in the city. In addition, in coordination with the

attending LEARNs met these standards.⁹⁹ Studies such as the LEARNs evaluation support the claim that after school programs are helpful for improving English learning students' academic performance. Therefore it can be concluded that Pasadena's growing rate of English learning students should increase the demand for after school programs in PUSD.

Another important statistic suggesting considerable demand for after school programs in Pasadena is that 63.7% of the students enrolled in the district are eligible for free and reduced lunches, for instance students whose families have an income lower than the federal poverty line.^{100 101} Although 63.7% represents a large percentage of the district's student body, it was also found that about 1500 of the 2000 students who attend Pasadena LEARNs are from low-income families.¹⁰² Pasadena LEARNs' enrollment has a significantly large portion of children

Chapter 6

Gaps Between Supply and Demand

Given the discrepancies between supply and demand for after school

students but elementary school students are too young to be taking public buses after school. This creates another problem because the majority of after school programs are offered to elementary school students, so many elementary school children who have parents or guardians that can not transport them to places after school sites are unable to attend after school programs.

Another factor contributing to the lack of student enrollment is the lack of education for parents in Pasadena about the benefits of after sch

Studies of after school programs have found that parental involvement in the programs plays a significant role in a student's well being and success in school. This finding can also be carried over to after school programs, where parental involvement is an important part of running a quality program¹²⁵. Studies such as "Building Assets: What Parents Can Do" by the Search Institute show that parent involvement in organizations dealing with youth, such as after school programs, helps the quality of programs, making them better places for the children.¹²⁶ By getting parents involved in after school programs, the parents are able to best shape after school programs. Parents are also important because they hold the after school programs accountable for doing their job.¹²⁷ At the end of the day it is the parent who eventually will decide whether the after school program that his/her child is attending is doing a good enough job or if the program should be changed. Unfortunately, parents are often so busy that in many cases it is difficult for after school programs to get parents involved. In many cases minimal parent involvement can be problematic because programs are not held accountable for what happens during after school hours. Parents just pick up their children when the program is over without trying to understand what the child has been doing for the past few hours.

Many Pasadena after school programs have made an effort to get the parents of their enrolled students involved in their programs. The Pasadena YMCA has set up a parent advisory board at every one of its sites. The advisory board is comprised of parents who come together and meet to discuss issues having to do with the program. The majority of the parents who are on the board are selected by staff members in the organization; however the meetings are open for any parent who wants to attend. The parent advisory committees are given multiple responsibilities such as creating the evaluation tools for the rest of the parents and acting as a bridge between the program staff and the parents.¹²⁸

The Pasadena YMCA also attempts to reach out to parents who are not willing to attend parent advisory board meetings by holding family ni

Organizations Working on After School

three hours of work for junior staff members. The part-time nature of after school jobs already

between the different programs there will be a more effective understanding about the issues and needs of the Pasadena after school community.

Chapter 9

Recommendations

Despite some significant progress, there is still a lot of work to be done before Pasadena provides adequate after school programs for those students and parents who need them. Based on some of the shortcomings of the after school programs in Pasadena, which have been highlighted in this paper, there are a number of changes which should be made to help serve the needs of Pasadena students who are currently being neglected. These recommendations are based on the gaps between supply and demand and the problems that the Pasadena after school programs have encountered. These recommendations are further supported by suggestions

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- 4) After school programs must use a portion of their new income to increase the wages of their workers, to help attract a higher quality staff.
- 5) After school programs should also require their staff members to participate in a significant training process that helps the new workers cope with different issues that may arise with the children and teach them how to maintain the best possible program environment.
- 6) Staff members must pass an 8th grade equivalency test so that the programs know that their staff members are capable of helping the students with their academics.
- 7) Each program must conduct a thorough evaluation, based on a statistical analysis rather than a parent evaluation, at least once every three years. This evaluation will give the programs feedback on what is working and what is not. If a program fails to improve, then the after school board should be allowed to pull the funding for that after school program.
- 8) Each program should hold parent meetings on a monthly basis so that parents have a way of addressing the after school program about problems or an opportunity to get involved with the program.
- 9) Programs must have a clear goal for how they would like to benefit students, which must be easily accessible for parents to read.
- 10) The program must work on a sliding pay scale so that there are spots available for children of every socioeconomic background.
- 11) Programs must also have bilingual staff members so that they are able to serve English learning students.

Need for More After School Programs For Middle and High School Students

The After School Commission should fund more programs that serve middle and high school students so that their needs are met. There are currently not enough after school programs for these students to choose from. However, if more after school programs are created for middle and high school students the program's curriculum needs to be carefully planned so that the activities offered are age appropriate and engaging for the students.

Need For Quality Programs

It is important to create program standards in Pasadena because there is too much variation between programs and it is difficult for parents to know the differences between the programs. Program standards will help keep parents informed of what the after school programs are providing. Standards would help weaker programs catch up to the higher quality ones. These requirements would not be intended to restrict the programs and force them to all be similar; rather, programs should find creative ways within these parameters to make their services effective.

Transportation

Transportation to after school programs located off school campuses is another issue that is holding back the expansion of student enrollment in Pasadena's after school programs. Only eight buses are designated for transporting children to after school programs. The Pasadena ARTS bus system is a start to offering transportation for the older students but it does not solve

the issue of transportation for elementary school children. To help solve the transportation need, the City of Pasadena Department of Transportation should conduct a study to assess the most efficient ways of providing transportation for all PUSD students to after school programs and how much this would cost. This project should be conducted by the Department of Transportation because it is the most knowledgeable about the workings of Pasadena's transportation system. Once this information is provided, PUSD should take the initiative to find a funding stream to generate the necessary money to put the new transportation plan in place. Finding the funding for transportation should be PU

school programs to get them to attend the meetings, and explaining the benefits of communication between the different programs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, if after school programs in Pasadena want to strengthen the quality and maintain the quantity of their programs they are going to have to: find a way to pass a parcel tax to create a consistent funding stream, create a board that will divide the money from the parcel tax among after school programs, create standards for all after school programs to raise the overall level of program quality, create a comprehensive transportation system so that the total number of children served increases, and to find better ways to educate parents about the benefits after school programs provide for students. These recommendations are based on the existing supply of after school programs in Pasadena, as well as the potential demand that could and should stimulate after school program expansion. Pasadena is making progress to get in line with the current trend of increased academic focus within after school programs, as well as increased quality, and these recommendations are designed to enhance such programs and ultimately improve the quality and capacity of after school programs offered to Pasadena's school aged children.

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- 30) Larrner, B. Mary and Zippiroli, Lorraine and Behrman, E. Richard "When School is Out: Analysis and Recommendations" The Future of Children_Fall 1999 Vol.9 Iss.2
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- 33) Lisa Jefferies personal interview January 2005
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- 37) Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1997
- 38) Pasadena Area Resource Guide of Programs and Activities 2004-2005
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- 39) Presentation by local business owner at the Coalition for Children Youth and Family on March 22, 2005
- 40) RAND Study Beckett Megan, Hawken Angela, and Jacknowitz Alison "Accountability for After-School Care: Devising Standards and Measuring Adherence to Them" RAND Distribution Services 2001
- 41) Sue Milie personal interview April 2005
- 42) Tom Selinski personal interview February 2005
- 43) Tom Seliskie personal interview November 2004
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http://www.vcsgv.org/adView.asp?ad_id=61

Appendix

1)

National League of Cities

Resource and Development Team
Parent Survey

Dear Parent:

We need your help! Your completion of this survey will assist the Resource and Development Team, a collaborative of the City of Pasadena, the Pasadena Unified School District and after school program providers, improve after school opportunities and resources for children. Your answers to the questions will help us make better choices for our children. Thank you for your participation!

Please answer the following:

1. How many school age children do you have in your household?

2. What are their ages?

3. What school(s) do they attend?

4. Do your children participate in after school programs?

Yes___ No___

5. If the answer to question #4 is NO, please let us know why not:

The programs are too far away _____

The programs are too expensive _____

The programs don't look interesting to my child _____

I don't know of any programs in my neighborhood _____

Other reasons: _____

6. If your answer to question #4 is yes, please list the programs below:

Please return this completed questionnaire to the collection box marked National League of Cities Survey in your child's school office by April 18th, 2005.

Thank you again for your help!