

# **An After-School Report**

Developed by:

The Connecticut State Department of Education  
in collaboration with  
The Department of Social Services, the Commission on Children and  
The Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee

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## INTRODUCTION

This report is presented in response to Section 1(c) of Public Act No. 03-206, *An Act Concerning After-School Programs*. This Act requires the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Services and the Executive Director of the Commission on Children, to establish an after-school advisory committee. This committee is to report on and make recommendations including, but not limited to, the following:

1. identification of existing state, federal and private resources to support and sustain after-school programs;
2. methods and practices to enhance coordination and goal setting among state agencies to achieve efficiencies and to encourage training and local technical assistance with respect to after-school programs;
3. identification of best practices;
4. methods of encouraging community-based providers;
5. professional development;
6. measures to address barriers to after-school programs; and
7. a private and public governance structure that ensures sustainability for after-school programs.

The results of the Committee's inquiries and recommendations to the General Assembly for further action by the After-School Advisory Committee follow.

### Context

The term “**after-school services**” refers to services that are offered formally and informally in most Connecticut communities. In the main, these services are procured by families with private providers to provide custodial care for school-age children during after-school hours, on holidays and during school vacation time. Costs of service vary based upon family/child needs and independent provider cost structure. The overwhelming majority of children in Connecticut receiving after-school services receive services through private, nonsubsidized, parent-funded arrangements. These families and providers are not obligated to report program or utilization data to the state. The absence of any required accountability data being reported to the state limits the ability of the State Department of Education (SDE) and the After-School Advisory Committee (ASAC) to certify a statistical report reflecting numbers of children served, numbers of children in need of services, numbers and characteristics of providers, cost to providers, level of payment by families or service component characteristics across service providers. This report does provide the legislature with insights into what we have learned through our support for after-school programs that are subsidized by state grants and child-care subsidy programs. The report also reflects client and program needs as experienced through the After-School Alliance, a network of public and private providers, and the SDE After-School Advisory Committee.

The term “**after-school program**” refers to all out-of-school-time programs, including before- and after-school, vacation and summer programs that assume responsibility for participant safety and extending educational support, among other services, to children and families in programs operating under a state approval or licensing authority. Such programs provide an environment

where students, staff members, parents and other stakeholders learn together as full partners. These partners share responsibility with schools for helping children become healthy, confident, imaginative, lifelong learners. After-School programs provide a bridge between formal learning in school and informal learning in community-based organizations. Program curriculums and activities provide opportunities for stimulating curiosity, instilling a love of learning, and nurturing a sense of wellness and confidence, in order to lay the foundation for future successful learning in school and in life.

After-School programs foster a community's ability to care for its children so that they can realize their full potential as responsible, contributing citizens. Successful, high-quality programs contribute to:

- protecting children and strengthening families and communities;
- diverting youth from the juvenile justice system;
- improving attitudes toward school and attendance rates;
- closing the achievement gaps between groups of children, leading to higher grades and test scores, as well as development of useful, marketable skills (e.g., computer, literacy, critical thinking, problem solving, leadership, teamwork), and helping students and families bridge the digital divide;
- reducing teen pregnancies, teen violence, substance abuse and other risk behaviors;
- increasing early development of health-promoting knowledge, behaviors and attitudes;
- decreasing dropout rates and increasing numbers of students pursuing further education or training;
- supporting working families and fostering student and family self-esteem, self-confidence and cultural awareness;
- increasing community involvement; and
- involving families in their children's learning, helping them more effectively guide their development into successful adulthood.

After-School programs extend their responsibility to families and schools by including supportive learning environments that are informed by student grade-level expectations, in addition to providing children with a safe environment, healthy recreation and appropriate social development support. In many towns, private providers have voluntarily formed formal and informal relationships with local education agencies or an individual school or PTA/PTO to provide after-school programs for the children in the school district or children attending a particular school.

The developers of this report (State Department of Education, Department of Social Services, Commission on Children and the Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee) believe that it is critical that all students have after-school opportunities. Whether these opportunities are at home, in informal family aftercare arrangements, or in formal programs, they should provide a safe environment where students feel comfortable and supported to apply new learning and explore particular interests. The learning environments of after-school programs must respect and nurture students' unique interests and talents at each stage of their development, and challenge them to reach their full potential.

The information in this report was obtained by sampling, interviewing, or examining state, federal and privately funded after-school programs in Connecticut. The report also gleans pertinent information from existing reports conducted by state agencies and state and local interest groups. There is currently no statewide relational database on after-school programs. Our ability to develop a comprehensive report on after-school services and client needs in Connecticut is limited by a lack of authority to require data from nonsubsidized after-school programs and service providers. At this time there is no funding to support incentives for voluntary statewide data gathering from after-school programs.

## 1. IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING STATE, FEDERAL AND PRIVATE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### Recommendations

- Develop licensing requirements or provide incentives for all service providers to participate in data collection
- Develop a central database to reflect service standards and student participation levels
- Develop questions for the SDE *Strategic School Profiles* to assess the relationships between schools and after-school programs
- Encourage the development of a provider trade association to enhance professional development, collaboration, public/private program support and sustainability

### Discussion

Although Connecticut does not currently have a data collection system to identify *all existing* state, federal and private resources to support and sustain after-school programs, the After-School Advisory Committee obtained such information from major after-school program providers in the state in FY 2002-03. This information was updated for this report. (See Appendix A.)

The identification of existing state, federal and private resources to support and sustain after-school programs is currently the responsibility of the Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee. The Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee is a public-private partnership among providers, advocates and state agencies interested in supporting children's success through after-school programs and school-family-community partnerships. During March 2004 the Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee, with the support of SDE and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, will identify an intermediary agent to coordinate the statewide after-school network; maintain a comprehensive, statewide inventory of available resources and community needs; and develop a central after-school database. These activities will serve to assist the Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee and the State Department of Education in increasing capacity, raising public awareness and encouraging investment to expand and sustain quality after-school programs that improve student outcomes and create lifelong learners, particularly among underserved children and families.

Given that only programs receiving state grants are obligated to report service data and adhere to state-determined program standards, incentives should be extended to other providers and programs to participate in a database that is as comprehensive as possible. Such incentives may

include association membership or opportunities to participate in subsidized professional development.

As discussed in greater detail below, the State Department of Education, through state and federal grant programs, funds approximately 300 after-school programs that are developed in association with local public schools, but not necessarily located in a public school building. These programs are located in 101 cities and towns and serve approximately 67,000 children between kindergarten and high school age. SDE funding for after-school programs reaches approximately 12 percent of the state's K-12 population. These funding efforts include:

**The Extended School Hours Grant.** Initiated in 1995, the Extended School Hours Grant provides funds to the 15 districts identified as priority school districts. The funds are used for academic, enrichment and recreational programs. In 2002-03, the Extended School Hours grant of \$3 million, combined with additional local and private resources, provided after-school programs for 35,342 students in 115 schools.

**The Family Resource Center Grant** in the 2002-03 school year awarded \$5.2 million to 61 centers located in Connecticut elementary schools. A portion of this money, combined with other local and private resources, served 4,228 school-age children in after-school programs.

**The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC)** was established by Congress as Title X, Part I to create *community-learning centers* that provide students with academic enrichment opportunities, as well as additional activities designed to complement their regular academic program. In the 2002-03 school year, the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant of \$5.2 million, combined with other local and private resources, provided 8,210 students with after-school programs.

**The Youth Service Bureaus Grant (YSB).** In 1978, the Connecticut General Assembly adopted legislation creating a grant program within the Department of Children and Youth Services to support community-based youth service bureaus. These bureaus provide after-school programs and prevention programs to youth in 126 communities, receiving \$2,722,679 in grants from the Department of Education. This amount only accounts for 15 percent of the total budget for Connecticut YSBs. YSB budgets are supported by municipal funds, federal funds, other discretionary funds and in-kind contributions amounting to \$17.5 million in 2003. This amount funded after-school support for more than 19,000 school-age children. The YSB grant program illustrates how small grants can provide incentives for many community partners to come together to make a project grow.

Similarly, the Department of Social Services (DSS) provides care for many of Connecticut's children through state and federal grant programs. These efforts, including after-school programs, target the needs of children birth through age 12. A brief description of each program follows:

The **Care 4 Kids (C4K)** program provides \$16 million statewide in support of school-age programs. Approximately 71,376 school-age children are provided before-and after-school programs and services through C4K subsidies.

The **Child Day Care Program** is a statewide, center-based initiative through which DSS provides funding to municipalities, Community Action Agencies (CAA) and nonprofit community-based service providers for child day-care services in facilities licensed by the Department of Public Health (DPH). Through 53 contracted vendors, services are provided to 45 towns and cities at a cost of \$27.7 million. The programs serve approximately 5,000 children and families with infant/toddler preschool and school-age care. School-age activities include physical indoor and outdoor play; creative and quiet activities; nutritional snacks; large-and small-group activities; and opportunities for homework completion in a structured environment before and after-school.

DSS provides funding for **before-and after-school programs** to 22 communities at more than 40 sites in schools and community centers throughout the state totaling \$459,166. School-age before-and after-school programs and activities include physical indoor and outdoor play; creative and quiet activities; nutritional snacks; large-and small-group activities; and opportunities for homework completion in a structured environment. Providers must maintain a Department of Public Health Child Day-care License.

The DSS Federal **Community Services Block Grant Program** provides \$10.2 million in grants to contractors who provide youth services to program participants and their families. Children and youths ages 3 to 18 participate in individual or group activities directed toward promoting physical, cultural and social development. Activities occur before, during and after-school hours.

The **Community Services Program** is a DSS-funded initiative that provides \$724,000 in grants to provide social service programs that include services for at-risk youth. Services include during-and after-school activities, counseling and, in some cases, residential treatment to enhance social development and avoidance of unhealthy risk-taking behavior.

The **Department's Human Resources Development** program provides \$1.0 million in grant funds to contractors to provide youth recreational activities, including participation in individual or group activities directed toward promoting physical, cultural and social development.

DSS provides \$4.1 million in funding to contracts to provide **Social Services Block Grant** activities which include services to at-risk youth, including individual and family counseling and activities to improve self-esteem, positive health practices and social development.

The **Teen Pregnancy Prevention** program provides \$2.0 million in grant funding to contracts to provide services to teens at-risk of becoming sexually active. Services include after-school and evening activities, tutoring and other academic assistance, as well as reproductive health education.

## **2. METHODS AND PRACTICES TO ENHANCE COORDINATION AND GOAL SETTING AMONG STATE AGENCIES TO ACHIEVE EFFICIENCIES AND TO ENCOURAGE TRAINING AND LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WITH RESPECT TO AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **Recommendations**

- Encourage public/private partnership at all levels and in all areas, as appropriate
- Develop annual after-school summits for after-school providers, advocates and state agencies (e.g., Department of Education, Department of Social Services, Office of Policy and Management, Department of Children and Families, Department of Public Health and Commission on Children) to set statewide goals and review program quality indicators
- Assess how each partner can contribute time, money, expertise or other resources to enhance after-school programming
- Identify annually a limited, high-priority list of common goals for adoption and implementation by the After-School Advisory Committee and its partners
- Encourage the strengthening of the After-School Alliance to foster collaboration, professional development and program quality
- Develop structures within the partnership that foster local or regional organization and management and provide clear opportunities to participate in policy decisions

### **Discussion**

Connecticut has been called a state full of pearls, but without a necklace (Harold Hodgkinson, 2003). This metaphor is especially true for after-school programs in the state. Many wonderful resources exist, but no state or local system connects them. Because discretionary grant programs have been developed over time for limited and discrete purposes, available funding often lacks the flexibility to meet emerging needs in communities and sometimes fails to reach those communities where it is needed most. Program quality and the range of choices for families are vastly different depending on where one lives in the state. The Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee, with the support of SDE, is committed to encouraging coordination among existing resources to improve the quality and capacity of all after-school program services, and to extend learning time for students who need it. We believe after-school program services are essential to closing the achievement gaps among Connecticut's students. Existing resources must be mobilized to establish greater equity and support for after-school opportunities for all children who need them.

In July 2000, Connecticut was one of eight states invited to participate in a symposium sponsored by the National After-School Alliance. Participants, including state agencies, foundations, providers and community organizations, developed a vision and plan to create a strong voice in Connecticut for increasing the number and sustainability of quality after-school programs in the state.

Since that time, the After-School Technical Assistance Committee, funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, has helped Connecticut begin to develop its statewide network, providing successful national network models and public policy initiatives. On June 10, 2002, more than 100 participants representing broad constituencies came together to form the Connecticut After-School Alliance. The advocacy group adopted a common vision, goals and

structure for working toward them. Connecticut After-School Alliance accomplishments to date include:

- *Lights on After-School* sponsored two successful celebrations at the State Capitol with more than 100 participants each. Speakers included Adrianna DeCanter of the U.S. Department of Education and Harry Wilson of the U.S. Department of Human Services;
- the first After-School Day, sponsored by key legislative leaders, was held at the State Capitol; and
- state funds were received to establish a pilot *After-School and the Arts* project in three municipalities aimed at developing local design teams to plan and implement after-school art programs.

In order to enhance and strengthen policy development, the State Department of Education convened eight state agencies and other representatives of stakeholders to form the Connecticut After-School Steering Committee. The Steering Committee sponsored meetings with representatives from various communities in Connecticut that conduct after-school programs in order to collect data about the status and condition of after-school programs throughout the state. Information about missions, goals, target populations, quality indicators and professional development was charted so the Steering Committee could better understand the similarities and differences among disparate programs. (See Appendix A.) This *Connecticut After-School Resource Mapping Chart* is a sample of Connecticut after-school programs. It serves as a foundation for a position paper on after-school programs which presents a common vision for after-school programming in the state. (See Appendix B.)

In November 2003, the Mott Foundation awarded the State Department of Education a grant to help staff the After-School Advisory Committee. Through this grant, the State Department of Education and its agent(s) will fund an intermediary agency to further state goals in the following areas: policy development and implementation; program quality; professional development; evaluation; public awareness/advocacy; and funding. Under the terms of this grant, the After-School Advisory Committee will establish work groups to meet objectives in each area, in order to improve the quality, capacity and sustainability of all after-school services in the state and narrow the achievement gaps that exist between children in various groups in Connecticut.

<b>Work Group—Role(s)</b>	<b>Lead Partners</b>
Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and implement policy</li> <li>▪ Increase coordination, planning and support</li> </ul>	State Department of Education Commission on Children
Program Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and disseminate successful methods and best practices</li> </ul>	Connecticut Charts-A-Course Connecticut Department of Social Services Connecticut School-Age Child Care Alliance
Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordinate and expand existing opportunities</li> </ul>	Connecticut School-Age Child Care Alliance
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and promote efficiency and action research models</li> <li>▪ Replicate programs</li> <li>▪ Measure local and state impact</li> </ul>	State Department of Education

Public Awareness/Advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote greater understanding of importance of after-school programming</li> <li>▪ Improve public access to information about local programs</li> </ul>	Commission on Children Connecticut After-School Alliance Local Program Providers State Department of Education
Funding Enhancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote creative and efficient funding collaboration</li> <li>▪ Improve program sustainability</li> </ul>	Connecticut Office of Policy and Management The Funders Project Connecticut Commission on Children, Connecticut After-School Alliance, Connecticut State Department of Education, Connecticut Department of Social Services

### 3. IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICES

#### Recommendations

- Promote quality standards that address priority components of after-school programming
- Identify and disseminate information about successful practices in model schools and communities
- Establish guidelines for constructive, age-appropriate activities for after-school programs
- Review and consider adopting *after-school program* accreditation standards for Connecticut providers
- Develop guidelines for coordinating *after-school program* information and sharing student progress with families and schools
- Develop web-based potential to share best practices among providers
- Establish a requirement for a police background check on all adult staff members working in after-school programs

#### **Discussion**

Successful after-school programs differ widely in response to the variable and changing needs and interests of the students and communities they serve. However, there are certain characteristics that quality programs have in common. These characteristics include:

##### *Caring Adults*

Quality programs maintain low adult/child ratios. All staff members working with children must be trained and supervised.

##### *Safe and Nurturing Learning Environments*

Quality programs maintain healthy, clean, safe learning environments where students feel comfortable and families are involved. The environment is conducive to the development of positive peer relationships. These environmental characteristics are reflected in all settings within the program, regardless of the facility housing the program.

### *Constructive Activities*

Quality programs are safe environments that develop physical, social and emotional skills in children, and also assist in increasing their academic achievement in school. Activities are varied, developmentally appropriate, and suited to varied learning styles. Possibilities include tutoring or enrichment in a variety of academic, social learning, and recreational curriculums. A high priority should be placed on youth involvement in selecting programs and activities.

#### *Collaborating is Best: Snapshot 1*

**The Norwalk After-School Alliance** is a citywide, volunteer collaborative of more than 40 organizations working together to expand and improve out-of-school-time offerings for Norwalk K-8 students. Established in July 2001, the Alliance maintains two working groups to address key concerns. The Needs Assessment Task Force documents the needs of families and the availability of after-school programming. The Training Task Force plans training for after-school program staff members to help improve the quality of existing programs.

Other quality characteristics include flexibility, cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness. An effective staff is culturally competent, skilled and qualified, and receives ongoing professional

#### *Collaborating is Best: Snapshot 2*

**The Bridgeport Lighthouse Program** has a long history of collaboration. Offered through a partnership between the city and Board of Education, programming is a direct result of numerous collaborations with community and faith-based organizations. Bridgeport uses advisory boards, community conversations and partnership development to ensure continued community support for after-school efforts. All partner agencies work hard to engage local businesses, parents and area residents in program planning and activities.

development to build on its knowledge and abilities. Professional development improves skills and understanding around safety, youth development, mentoring, quality standards and academic support. Evaluation is ongoing to ensure that programs meet local needs and support learning.

In the most effective programs, collaboration links programs with schools and school-time learning. Programs partner with parents and the community to improve consistency of messages and increase learning opportunities. Collaboration with the community can maximize funding and link children and families to other community supports, such as language and literacy services, recreational opportunities, and health services.

### *Management*

*After-School program* leaders must be part of local goal-setting structures. They must use and manage a variety of funding sources. Effective program management must ensure an organized, safe and sustainable environment for consistent quality over time. All management must enforce a mandatory background check for all adult staff members working in after-school programs. Lastly, effective management engages parents and students, as appropriate, in the program's decision-making process.

#### *Collaborating is Best: Snapshot 3*

**Enfield's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program** guarantees academic consistency by maintaining a flow of information. School and after-school program staff member meet regularly to identify goals, discuss the needs of individual children, develop curriculum and reflect on successes and challenges. School staff members provide the essential link by sharing information on curriculum, homework assignments, assessment results and instructional strategies.

#### 4. METHODS OF ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY-BASED PROVIDERS

##### Recommendations

- Support and encourage city officials, boards of education and principals to collaborate with community-based organizations and faith-based organizations in expanding accessible after-school programs
- Promote public-private partnerships
- Engage local schools, businesses, parents and area residents in program planning activities and establishing program goals

##### Discussion

Collaborations require a commitment to participate in shared decision making and allocation of resources related to activities in response to identified *after-school program* needs. Community- or faith-based organizations that engage in successful after-school collaborations share resources; develop, implement and evaluate programs together; establish consistent policy; and jointly conduct educational programs. School-family-community partnerships provide opportunities to rethink how organizations within a community relate to each other and how they can respond to the growing needs of their community, often in the face of scarce resources. Diversity is often a strength of community-based providers. School-family-community partnership provides the richness that comes from including members of different cultural, racial, ethnic and income groups.

#### 5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

##### Recommendations

- Provide statewide, on-site access to consistent, ongoing, quality professional development, resulting in a credential based on quality standards
- Establish a statewide calendar of after-school education and training opportunities
- Promote after-school-related higher education and other credit-granting opportunities
- Ensure that professional development opportunities include knowledge and skill building around safety, positive youth development and academic support, especially in reading, math and science

##### Discussion

Connecticut *after-school program* staff members and volunteers have numerous opportunities to attend professional development activities. For example, Connecticut Charts-A-Course is a statewide professional development system for early education and school-age care. Its mission is to support career development and program improvement by promoting the achievement of national and state professional standards. Connecticut for Community Youth Development also provides professional development training around positive youth development. The Connecticut School-Age Child Care Alliance (CSACA) currently provides two statewide conferences yearly, as well as four regional workshops. CSACA also publishes a quarterly newsletter and provides consultation at program sites.

Challenges related to professional development include finding creative ways to eliminate duplication making existing professional development more accessible to some communities and

making programs and staff members more aware of existing opportunities. The After-School Advisory Committee, through the assistance of the Mott Foundation Grant, will identify gaps in professional development opportunities for program staff members statewide.

## 6. MEASURES TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

<b>Recommendations</b>
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- Examine and address barriers identified in the *Before and After-School Activities in Connecticut's Elementary and Middle Schools Final Report* (Spectrum Associates Market Research, 2002)
- Identify high school barriers
- Develop a handbook of strategies for overcoming barriers to after-school programs
- Coordinate training around measures to address barriers to after-school programs

### Discussion

The State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) commissioned a research firm to carry out an extensive examination of the barriers to after-school activities in the state's elementary and middle schools. The final report on the barriers to operating and accessing after-school activities, *Before and After-School Activities in Connecticut's Elementary and Middle Schools Final Report* (Hartstone & Richetelli, 2002), also provides ideas for enhancing activities in the future. More than 1,000 respondents, including school principals, superintendents, board of education chairpersons and chief elected officials, ranked a list of possible barriers to before- and after-school activities within elementary and middle schools. The five most significant barriers reported by both elementary and middle schools were:

1. insufficient funds to run activities;
2. lack of transportation for children;
3. insufficient school staff members to oversee building use;
4. lack of available building space; and
5. inability to identify qualified staff/volunteers to run program.

The State After-School Advisory Committee supports the OPM findings, and will develop training and other measures to address these barriers.

## 7. PRIVATE AND PUBLIC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES THAT ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY FOR AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

### Recommendations

- Bring together representatives from the public and private sectors to share goals
- Encourage all partners to contribute time, money, expertise and other resources to the partnership
- Assist partners to work together toward common goals and objectives
- Facilitate shared decision-making and management responsibilities among partners
- Develop an intermediary to coordinate the statewide after-school network

### Discussion

A public-private partnership exists when the public sector joins with the private sector in pursuit of a common goal. Public-private partnerships for after-school programming should focus on new ways to expand and improve the capacity of a school, neighborhood, community or state to meet the needs of children, youth and their families.

A single, strong, statewide after-school network is needed that has a private and public governance structure to further draw together policymakers, educators, child-care providers, youth development workers, program developers, advocates, students, parents and others interested in supporting children's success through after-school programs and school-family-community partnerships. It is hoped that a governance structure can be sustained through the work of an intermediary organization. This intermediary will develop funding streams that will allow it to support this network to become a permanent statewide resource for after-school programs in Connecticut.

The intermediary will coordinate the statewide after-school network to provide a means for joint planning and curriculum development, efficient sharing of resources and best practices, building bridges between federal, state and local initiatives, and forging partnerships necessary to the development of comprehensive statewide after-school policies. The outcome of this work will be to increase capacity, raise public awareness, and encourage investment of additional resources to expand and sustain quality after-school opportunities that improve student outcomes and create lifelong learners, particularly among underserved children and families.

Key stakeholders will support and participate in the work of the After-School Advisory Committee in several ways. The Connecticut State Department of Education will provide statewide technical assistance and program management to schools and parents participating in out-of-school-time programs. The Office of Policy and Management will help the Advisory Committee coordinate existing federal and state resources. The Connecticut After-School Alliance will lead several work groups and increase representation of local providers in the network. Connecticut Charters-A-Course will implement the framework for enhancing credentials of personnel who work for after-school programs. The United Way of Connecticut, the Waterbury Foundation, the Norwalk After-School Alliance, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, and the Connecticut Association of Youth Service Bureaus will continue to collaborate at state and local levels to strengthen policies and programs, increase capacity, and raise the level of public awareness of the positive impact of after-school programs on student learning.

All key stakeholders and many local decision makers are represented on the Connecticut After-School Advisory Committee. They include, but are not limited to:

- Department of Education
- Department of Public Health
- Commission on Children
- Connecticut Association of School Superintendents
- Connecticut Business and Industry Association
- United Way of Connecticut
- Office of Policy and Management
- Education Connection
- Office of Workforce Competitiveness
- Connecticut School Age Child Care Alliance
- Connecticut Association of Youth Service Bureaus
- Connecticut Association of Boards of Education
- Department of Social Services
- Bridgeport Lighthouse Program
- Department of Children and Families
- Governor’s Prevention Partnership
- State Representatives

The work of the After-School Advisory Committee is guided by the understanding that all families and communities have strengths and play critical roles in children’s educational success. With the collaboration made possible by the dedication of all these partners, the vision of a single, strong network to coordinate and strengthen after-school programs in Connecticut is being realized. The After-School Advisory Committee is committed to supporting the success of all Connecticut children through improved after-school opportunities.